







**ROMAN CATHOLIC METHODS  
OF BIRTH CONTROL**





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DEDICATED TO  
THOSE ROMAN CATHOLICS  
AS WELL AS ALL OTHERS  
WHO DESIRE TO FACE THE TRUTH



“BE not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

“Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”



## INTRODUCTION

I HAVE read this book with very great interest. It should do an enormous amount of good in throwing light upon the subject.

Slowly and reluctantly I have been forced to the conclusion that the Roman Catholic Church is not so much a religious community as a great political machine, endeavouring to control our newspapers and other sources of information and to acquire a dominating position, through a small but highly-organised minority vote, over the affairs of Great Britain. Many good Romanist laymen do not yet understand how they are being used, trained as they are in habits of submission and excluded from the free access to literature through the censorship imposed by their authorities. On the other hand, the good-natured English public is slow to believe that plots can be organised against our liberties. Therefore it is of great importance that some of the facts mentioned in this book should be widely known. The



overflowing of the Irish Romanist population is produced at the cost of much pain, disease and death among the women. It is not possible any longer to doubt that an attempt is being made, through immigration from Southern Ireland, gradually to drive the English out of England and the Scots out of Scotland.

P. DEARMER.

*Canon of Westminster*

## PREFATORY NOTES

*From* HUGH WALPOLE, Esq., C.B.E.

"I think this a very brave and logical book. It will, I hope, appeal especially to fair-minded Roman Catholics—but its *general* effect must be important and valuable. I am entirely in sympathy with the cause."

*From* Professor JULIAN S. HUXLEY, M.A.

"Dr. Stopes has done a real service in writing this book. Grave questions are involved and she has brought them out of the fog of veiled allusion and circumlocution in which they have been wrapped, and which has too often permitted unscrupulous opponents to confuse the issue. A number of important facts concerning the Roman Catholic position on birth control are here set down, amply documented, in black and

white, so that the public can form their own judgments on this important subject.”

*From Lady ACLAND.*

“Dr. Marie Stopes’ book sheds a new and clear light on the respective attitudes of superstition and reason towards Birth Control. It should therefore be read by all who desire to take a distinct stand on this vital question of Race and Hygiene.”

*From Sir W. ARBUTHNOT LANE, Bart.,  
C.B., M.B., M.S. (LOND.), F.R.C.S. (ENG.).*

“I consider your book an excellent dissertation on the evidence that the Roman Catholic Church (or indeed any other creed or organisation) should not exert any influence whatever on the manner in which human beings carry out the details of a contract which is essentially legal. The intelligence of the public has been aroused, and they have at last grasped the enormous importance of the work which you have so carefully and courageously done. Your work will stand for ever in spite of any effort

which is being made to oppose or depreciate it. I am very pleased that I have been associated with you from its commencement, and I feel that Birth Control is the most important factor in the improvement of the health, happiness, and prosperity of the human race. I am sick to death with the futile efforts of bodies to stem the rising tide of progress."



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# PART I

## CHAPTER I

### OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS

WHEN Rome speaks of Birth Control she describes it as :

“Unnatural Sin.”

“Entirely anti-Christian.”

“Taking us back to the Jungle.”

“Immoral Propaganda.”

“Contraception the Greatest Evil of the Day.”

“The Contraceptive Act is just a Sexual Perversion.”

“Unnatural Vice.”

“A Perversion of Appetite.”

“Dr. Downey denounces ‘Stopery’: Wrong from Ethical Standpoint.”

“‘Stopery’ a Putrescent Propaganda.”

These are a few of the terms currently applied by Roman Catholics of the day to



the new morality of erogamic love, consciously, seriously, and deliberately exercising its function of parenthood under the guidance of science. These phrases are but samples, yet they are enough to indicate the attitude of mind of those who represent the old order and misrepresent the new.

Father Vincent McNabb, in *From a Friar's Cell*, in 1923 said: "It is a grievous disorder, and, therefore, a grievous sin, to desire satisfaction in such sexual intercourse as could not result in offspring."

The same priest headed an article about me: "Murder Clinics."

From articles and news paragraphs under such headings let me select a few from three large filing boxes.

# "PROPAGANDISTS WHO PERVERT MARRIAGE."

## "CONTRACEPTION, THE GREATEST EVIL OF THE DAY."

## "JESUIT AND THE BEST COUNTER-ATTACK."

"If I were asked to mention, off-hand, the greatest evil of the day, I might reasonably

point to the perversion of marriage through the belief and practice of contraception," said Fr. Henry Day, S.J., opening a debate at the Catholic Citizens' Parliament, London, in October 1930.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop Downey, speaking at a Catholic Women's League Anniversary, reported in the *Catholic Herald* of the 17th December 1932, said: "The birth controllers are taking us back to the jungle. They want birth control, death control, and life control; in fact, they are ready to control anything but themselves."

#### "UNNATURAL SIN

"Another side of the social question," said Father McNabb, "was the practice and propaganda of birth control, which was subversive of Christian morality and detrimental to the welfare of families and the State. This unnatural sin was being propounded as the panacea for the present-day economic ills, and was entirely an anti-Christian attitude" (*Catholic Herald*, 24th Sept. 1932).

Some even go the length of shouting, in large print (as they did in the *Catholic Times* in 1930), "DEATH RATHER THAN KNOWLEDGE."

Never a week, scarcely ever a day now passes without some newspaper somewhere recording some vehement statement of priest or prelate of the Roman Catholic Church denouncing "birth control," or contraception, or "birth prevention," as anti-Christian immorality, using some variation or other of the phraseology to which they have accustomed their flock.

"No Stopery" resounds in their press, and stirs them like a war-cry; and, like war horses with fiery nostrils champing the bit, Roman Catholics hurl themselves into the fray.

The *Catholic Herald*, in December 1931, headed its leader: "STOPERY," and shouted: "Obscenity has won out."

"The Catholic Church, and certain Catholic countries have taken a strong stand against the spread of this degradation."

"The Irish Free State is doing what it can to stamp out Stopery, just as it rejects divorce and other good anti-Catholic doctrines and practices."

Again, in the same year, the *Catholic Herald* published the following: "Glasgow Medical Guild discuss 'Stopery'. A reflection on the non-Catholic morality."

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liver-

pool is reported: "DR. DOWNEY DENOUNCES 'STOPERY'." "BIRMINGHAM YOUNG MEN CONDEMN 'STOPERY'. Government asked to take action."

Under the flair heading of "DENUNCIATION OF STOPERY: PRIESTS' SCATHING INDICTMENT," in the *Catholic Herald* for the 5th September 1931, we read that Father W. D. Connolly, O.S.B., said that "birth prevention was the greatest violation of nature: an attempt to prevent the fulfilment of the designs of God." And in the *Morning Post* (24th March 1931) Cardinal Bourne is reported to have said about sterilisation and birth control: "There was in those practices something more degrading even than the evils of war."

### "NO STOPERY!"

"A protest by 20,000,000 women. An anti-social evil. 20,000,000 Catholic women have condemned artificial Birth Control as a pagan and immoral principle which is likely to undermine the strength of nations" (*Catholic Herald*, 23rd July 1927).

How they hate me! The *Catholic Herald* of the 15th August 1931, speaking of mental defectives, claimed that they were not such

a danger to the State as very advanced persons, saying: "One Marie Stopes, with her destructive propaganda, is a more terrible foe to morality, liberty, progress, and all for which Christianity stands, than 10,000 mental deficients." Stating that "the advocates of birth prevention, of divorce, of socialism, of secular education . . . are just 'Hell let loose' upon our civilisation"; concluding cheerfully: "It is the advocates of these despairing and slavish doctrines that should be sent to the lethal chamber."

In the ordinary way, criticism of our English judges is almost unheard, and if voiced at all it is in a courteous and deprecating manner. But let a judge touch on population problems and he is no longer sacrosanct.

So recently as 1925, a judge at the White-chapel County Court told a woman who was in arrears of rent and who had six children that he was certain she had not been taught how not to have them; the South London Roman Catholics sent a protest to the Lord Chancellor about the words of the judge. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Pella seconded a Resolution of protest. The Salford Diocesan Catholic

Federation protested to the Lord Chancellor appealing for protection from the judge's unpardonable strictures. In short, Judge Cluer (for he it was) bore the brunt of the battery which was turned in his own direction by Mr. Justice McCardie a few years later by his far more direct and open advocacy of birth control.

The Roman Catholics are conscious that their language is not echoed by the rest of the community in the midst of which they dwell as neighbours, though subject to an alien rule.

In 1924 Cardinal Bourne bewailed the "lone fight for morality which the Roman Catholic Church was waging." The *Sunday Chronicle* tells us in that year that Cardinal Bourne rebuked the other Churches on the birth-control issue. "Replying to taunts against the Catholics, Cardinal Bourne referred to the lone fight they had carried on in the cause of public morality against birth-control practices." "The response to the appeal for a campaign in defence of public morality," he said, "was a dishonour to other religious organisations, for the Catholic Church had been left to fight the battle alone at great cost."

Hence they herald the good news when they can get others to work with them, and they announce support from other religious bodies with such emphasis as this:

*Catholic Herald*, June 20, 1931

**"ANGLICAN BISHOPS IN ANTI-  
STOPERY CAMPAIGN**

**"RELIGIOUS BODIES JOIN IN CRUSADE**

*"Vicious Design on People Denounced*

**"SOCIAL FALLACIES WHICH THREATEN  
RENEWAL OF SLAVERY**

"Catholic and Church of England Bishops, non-Catholic clergymen, priests, and members of various religious bodies took part in the opening of a new campaign, which took place in Manchester on Monday, with the object of exposing the moral and physical dangers of the use of contraceptives, and to educate the rising generation, to use the words of the Bishop of Woolwich, 'to have nothing to do with these abominable things.' "

In 1922, concluding an address to a distinguished audience, among whom sat the Earl of Denbigh, the President of the Roman

Catholic Union of Great Britain, in the chair, and also Mr. F. R. Anderton, then Chairman of the London County Council, and many other men of public note and influence, Dr. Halliday Sutherland was reported in *The Universe* (a Roman Catholic newspaper) under the heading "Birth Control Nonsense" as using the words: "Some of you may remember that during the war you had to give the terrible order—'The position must be held at all costs and under no circumstances is retirement permitted.' These are the orders to-day of the Catholic Church, and that order comes from God Himself."

Yet the other Churches do not read God's word in the same way, as manifested by our own Anglican Bishops. (See pp. 84-5.)

The headlines in the press early in 1931, when, at last, at the very end of 1930, the Pope issued his notorious Encyclical on Christian marriage, nearly all concentrated their headlines on the birth-control issue. Only the dignified *Times* headed their report, "THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL ON MARRIAGE. THE POPE'S VIEWS." Streaming across the tops of the pages, in large capitals, the everyday press dinned into the world's



ears the idea of: "THE CRIME OF BIRTH CONTROL" in the *Irish Times*; "THE POPE CONDEMNS BIRTH CONTROL," in the *Daily Mail*; "CONDEMNATION OF BIRTH CONTROL," in the *Daily Telegraph*; the *Daily Express* in large capitals half across a page headed their report of the Encyclical: "BIRTH CONTROL IS MURDER." And thus, all round the world. The main heading of the *Paris Daily Mail* was: "THE POPE AND BIRTH CONTROL." The *Herald* of Canada: "DIVORCE, BIRTH CONTROL, AND TRIAL MARRIAGES FLAYED BY ENCYCLICAL." The *New York Evening Post*: "POPE CONDEMNS BIRTH CONTROL." The *Vancouver Sun*: "POPE CONDEMNS BIRTH AND TRIAL MARRIAGE." The *Ceylon Observer* announced: "POPE DENOUNCES BIRTH CONTROL." The *Times of Assam*: "POPE'S BAN ON BIRTH CONTROL: BRANDED AS GRAVE SIN."

The girdle round the earth was complete, a noose in which the mind of Mr. Everyman was snared. If one collects again the papers of the early days of 1931, one finds that to the non-Roman Catholic public of the world at large it had been announced most thoroughly and emphatically that once more, in an incontrovertible and conclusive fashion,

*the Church of Rome in the Papal Encyclical utterly and entirely condemned Birth Control : and yet—I conclude this chapter with a question: “Does the Church of Rome condemn birth control?”*

Does it?

Read on, I pray you, to the end.

## CHAPTER II

### ROMAN CATHOLIC BIRTH-CONTROL METHODS

THOSE who discuss the Church of Rome too often go too far back in her history for the material for their arguments, so let us begin with a very recent statement supported by the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur* in 1931, made by Dr. de Guchteneere, in his *Judgment on Birth Control*, who says: "In the matter of birth the Church has never counselled an immoderate increase and multiplication; such a policy would hardly be in conformity with her conception as to the dignity of man, and of his reason, whereby he can control his impulses and guide them to a rightful end.

"So long as the laws of life are kept, and the restriction of births is effected by reason, proven by sacrifice, and not by giving way to an all-powerful passion, the Church has

nothing to say: the main principles are safeguarded, and love has nothing to lose by a renouncement which demands an equal measure of generosity. . . . Every well-ordered conjugal life involves periods of continence and, ordinarily, complete continence at an age when it is rendered easier, although not absolutely incumbent. This is necessary to limit fecundity."

The comprehensive work, *Moral Theology: A Complete Course*, in two volumes, by J. A. McHugh, O.P. and C. J. Callan, O.P., published in 1930 in New York, U.S.A., with the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*, contains the following: "*Is Birth Control Ever Lawful?* (a) If this refers to an *end* (namely, the limitation of the numbers of children or the spacing of their arrival) it is not unlawful in itself and it is sometimes a duty, as when the wife is in very poor health or the wife is unable to take care of more."

Soon after this in America the old "safe period" method was popularly dished-up for general consumption as a "new" birth-control method, and presented with a veneer of pseudo-science. Widely circulated literature bolstered itself up with the theory of a Japanese, Dr. K. Ogino; in short, some-

thing that one should almost designate a "stunt" was made of this. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* came out with flare headlines, "Church Studies New Theory of Birth Control," "Doctors and Clergymen Meet in Discussion." It is particularly significant, therefore, to note that on February 25th of this year the Editor of the weighty Catholic journal, *America*, *A-Catholic-Review-of-the-Week*, considers "This 'Catholic' Birth Control" himself in a two-page article, making the title the front flare of his journal, adding the words: "The affair has assumed such proportions under the pretext of good that the term 'commercial racket' can hardly be withheld."

The Roman Catholic Editor says that in spite of the misleading statements of Dutch and Belgian doctors telling the public that they have had uniform success with this method, he himself adds: "It is tragic to think that hopes have been falsely raised of a way around the prohibition of birth control, by a method that is advertised as certain. One shudders when one thinks of the results of disillusionment. And what of the ethics of selling a book when half the buyers of it may find that it is useless for

them after they have bought it?"—concluding his article: "Doctors have been contemptuously referred to as 'conservative' because they have not accepted this method all at once. It behooves priests and Catholic leaders generally to be as prudent as the doctors, or we will store up for ourselves a lot of trouble."

In this country, where open discussion on birth control had been particularly active, at the Church of Sacred Heart, Leicester, Father Hugh, in an outburst against scientific birth control, is reported to have said: "The Church does *not* ask every woman to have thirteen children. We teach birth control ourselves, but these proposed clinics are not going to teach our methods, or I would have nothing but praise for them."

What does Rome mean when she says "*our* methods of birth control?"

This is a question which no one has yet answered clearly. Let me do so. But to do so I must speak clearly.

At this point I should perhaps prepare the reader for some very explicit descriptions of facts, because their clear comprehension is essential to the real understanding of the fundamental issues we are considering.

For long past the idea of the "controversial" nature of some aspects of procreation has been fostered by the vagueness of the veiled and indirect references to functions and physiological processes. My terminology in the following pages is explicitly scientific and theological. It is not more explicit than is essential, and most of the terminology used is that expected in medical text-books and manuals of theology in general use by Roman Catholics. In the latter, however, some of the essential points are concealed from the general reader in Latin, yet unmarried men, many of them young, are expected to discuss all these details with women in the confessional. As clarity of thought cannot be transmitted without clarity of expression, I trust that those who are unaccustomed to facing the facts of this subject except in a haze, will now do so in co-operation with me, calmly and clearly.

There are no illustrations in this book, and for a fuller account of the more medical aspects of the next two chapters, reference should be made to other works wherein details and illustrations are provided, namely, *Contraception: Its Theory, History and Practice*, and *The Human Body*.

Let us now answer the question: What does Rome mean when she says "Our methods of birth control"?

To limit the family, Rome permits a couple:

- A. To refrain altogether from the sex act.  
This is *abstinence*, and is *not* a form of birth control. (See definition on p. 25.)
- B. To use coitus accompanied by means of birth control.
  - (i) Arranging coitus according to the calendar, choosing those days only when the woman is presumed to be infertile. This is the "safe period," or *tempus ageneseon*, or *tempus inter-menstruum*.
  - (ii) To use and enjoy ordinary coitus at any time, but to interfere with the physiological reactions so that after excitation, erection, and intromission, only ejaculation is prevented. This is *coitus reservatus*. (It is to be distinguished from *coitus interruptus*, which is a deadly sin.)
- C. The use of normal and completed



coitus followed by certain quite "natural" actions, such as sitting up in bed and coughing violently, arising and urinating with rapid abdominal movements, etc. I do not find these methods explicitly mentioned in her theological works, but in general all *natural* actions being permitted it is not necessary for such natural actions to be reported in confession, and knowledge of their partial efficacy as birth-control methods passes from one woman to another. They are not very reliable, but they are used with success by some women all the world over.

That Rome permits any of these well-known methods of birth control would, a few years ago, have been hotly denied. Her permissions are still not realised by the majority of people, so some references should be given.

First, *re* B. i. Dr. Halliday Sutherland, in the witness-box, in the famous *Stopes-Sutherland* trial in which a denunciation of birth control had been made, gave evidence under cross-examination as follows :

(Q.) "Is it within your knowledge, your personal knowledge, that a very large number of lives between husband and wife are rendered unhappy by mutual difficulties and estrangements on the subject of intercourse?"

(A.) "I would not say a large number; I say certainly a number are."

(Q.) "I will not trouble about a large number; let me just take a number, and see whether you agree with this. Do you agree that that may be caused more through ignorance of the proper functions of married life?"

(A.) "Yes, I do."

(Q.) "May it also be caused by a repugnance on the part of one to the other?"

(A.) "Yes, certainly."

(Q.) "May it also be caused by the feeling that as children are inevitable, the husband and wife have to abstain from intercourse and drift farther and farther apart?"

(A.) "That would be a cause of unhappiness in marriage?"

(Q.) "Certainly?"

(A.) "No."

(Q.) "Do you really mean that?"

(A.) "I do."

(Q.) "Just think; a woman says she does not feel able to have any more children?"

(A.) "Yes."

(Q.) "The only thing she can do is to keep her husband away from her?"

(A.) "Oh no."

(Q.) "What else can she do?"

(A.) "Intercourse may be limited to one particular period—the menstrual period." [*sic* in printed report for the House of Lords.]

(Q.) "What you mean is that there are some periods within the month in which sexual intercourse may be safer?"

(A.) "I would go farther. The latest figures make me go a little farther than that. I say there is a period immediately preceding, seven days preceding, the menstrual period when, so far as the graph which has been made out from this

goes, it shows there is a phase, an absolute negative phase."

(Q.) "Would you have any objection to every married woman knowing that?"

(A.) "No, I would not."

(Q.) "Would you have any objection to a book being circulated telling her that in the plainest, simplest, most straightforward language?"

(A.) "No."

This is the so-called "safe period."

A more official and explicit authority for the same practice can be found in the considered words of the Reverend Monsignor Canon Brown, now the Bishop of Pella, who, giving evidence before the National Birth-Rate Commission, admitted that the Church of Rome permitted the well known and widely used method of birth control known as the so-called "safe period." What Bishop Brown said was (see Report, p. 393): "Where all other deterrents fail, married couples may be allowed to limit intercourse to the inter-menstrual period, sometimes called *tempus ageneseos*."

Monsignor Canon Brown was discreetly

vague about the limits of this time, but the recent American '*Complete Course*' of *Moral Theology* by McHugh and Callan (quoted on p. 13) is quite explicit and states, "Since marriage intercourse has for its ends not only reproduction . . . it is lawful even when conception is impossible or less probable . . . during the so-called agenesic period (between the fifteenth day after the beginning of menstruation and the fifth day before the beginning of another), or at the time of lactation."

In addition to the "safe period," another method allowed by Roman Catholic theologians (B. ii.), technically called *coitus reservatus*, will be discussed in detail in the next chapter; but in the meantime, so that no false impression might be created in the mind of a reader not technically trained, it should be stated that *coitus reservatus* differs from *coitus interruptus*. An influential authority to quote that *coitus reservatus* is officially permitted by the Church of Rome is *A Manual of Moral Theology*, in two volumes, by Father Slater. This has appeared in several editions with Rome's *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*. In my direct correspondence with Father Henry Davis, S.J. (who, in the modern

Church has perhaps taken the place of Slater, who died a few years ago), there is confirmation that the use of *coitus reservatus* is permitted. He added to me: "I do not agree with you that it is unnatural, if both husband and wife desire it."

Father Davis, however, has nothing to say about the subject of Rome's permission of *coitus reservatus* in his book, *Birth Control: The Fallacies of Dr. M. Stopes*, 1928. The omission is indeed *most* remarkable, and one can only conclude that the authorities of the Church, naturally, feel that the less the layman is allowed to know about the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church about this method the better it is for the Church. The full significance of this omission will not be realised, however, till Chapters III and IV have been read.

At this stage an astonished and perhaps even enraged Roman Catholic reader may proclaim: "But these methods of preventing pregnancy are not birth control!" Indeed, that extraordinary attitude was once taken explicitly by Father Henry Davis himself in a public controversy with me. This ultimately led to my serving a writ on Cardinal Bourne, the Roman Catholic Bishop of

Nottingham, and others as well as on himself, of which some account will follow in a later Chapter (p. 81).

Father Henry Davis's position was untenable. Moreover, Roman Catholic clerics had rightly called such methods birth control for years before I did. For instance, Father Vincent McNabb, O.P., in 1923 wrote: "It will be seen from these authoritative words of the Cardinal Archbishop that the Roman Catholic Church does not condemn birth-control. What she condemns is neo-malthusian methods of birth control."

Recently it has been argued that these methods of procedure, of which the object is to allow coitus and yet to prevent the woman becoming pregnant are *not* methods of birth control! To refute it and to make it clear that the procedures are correctly classified as birth control, it is well to define explicitly what is meant by "birth control," more correctly and scientifically termed "the control of conception."

It is characteristic of the general fog surrounding the whole subject that no scientific or accurately worded definition of birth control existed. Hence in 1931 I set out a definition of birth control. It has been

generally accepted, and I think no exception can be taken to it. It is as follows: "DEFINITION. *Contraception (Birth Control) is the use by either sex of any means whatsoever whereby coitus (the act of union between man and woman) may be experienced, while at the same time the fusion of the ovum with the spermatozoon may be averted so that conception does not take place.*"

This definition completely covers all that is logically possible to define as contraception or birth control, and it is important at this point to notice that *it does not cover abstinence* from sex-union. It is essential to make this truly fundamental distinction clear: persons, whether married or living physiologically unmated, who do *not* exercise the act of *coitus*, are not using contraception or birth control. Birth control only comes in when the act of coitus is in use. When the reader is faced with a clear definition of contraception, such as is given above, it may seem superfluous to emphasise this point; but I can assure him that in the decade of controversy with theologians over the question of the permissibility or morality of the use of birth control, on innumerable occasions my opponents have made high-sounding claims which involved a complete



confusion of ideas about the exercise of what they term "self-control." So it is really necessary to unravel it in detail. Also, those who argued against the theologians have sometimes played into their hands and themselves tended to confuse the issues by falsely or carelessly asserting that the monks and nuns, and other unmarried persons, were exercising birth control because they were not utilising their potential sex-elements in order to propagate, a false 'argument' very naturally deeply resented by the Roman Catholics. Let me say simply and unmistakably, then, that *families may be limited by abstinence or the use of coitus coupled with one or more of the very many possible methods of 'birth control.'* It is the latter, namely, the procedure of those who use coitus, which we are discussing.

By clear definition, such confusions and false arguments are, I hope, swept away and the position clarified, once for all.

In the last few years, since I have begun to force the attention of the public to the fact (which Rome had hitherto for so long kept discreetly vague not only from the Protestant outer world but from the more illiterate of their own people), that the

Church of Rome permits certain methods of birth control, those who have indulged in argument or rhetoric on behalf of Rome have taken up the position that *as* the Church of Rome condemned all birth control, these methods of controlling conception, permitted by the Church of Rome, are *not* methods of birth control! But this position cannot be maintained; it is indefensibly illogical, physiologically false and untrue. The methods permitted by the Church of Rome, methods known and used sporadically by almost every other sect and all over the world, found their place irrespective of Catholicism among the other sixty or more methods described and dealt with in my text-book: *Contraception, its Theory, History, and Practice*. It is true they do not involve the use of a chemical, or of a manufactured article, but if one attempts to define birth control as depending on chemicals or manufactured articles, the definition becomes hopelessly illogical and inaccurate—in short, breaks down in many directions. The above definition is the only one which logically and completely covers all the wide and rapidly increasing range of potential action, whose object is to permit the couple

to utilise the act of coitus and to safeguard themselves from the fusion of ovum and spermatozoon causing pregnancy.

Let us now consider in detail whether the methods of contraception permitted by the Church of Rome are sound and wholesome physiologically. They are approved theologically. Their "morality" is vouched for by the authority setting itself up to regulate the morality of the world, so that our investigation need only concern itself with their physiological nature and reactions. In short, what are these methods of birth control permitted by Rome, how do they react, how do they differ from other birth-control methods in current use?

## CHAPTER III

### PHYSIOLOGICAL DETAILS OF METHODS PERMITTED TO ROMAN CATHOLICS

THE first point immediately to strike one is that the Church of Rome condemns all the methods which place control in the hands of the woman herself. The methods she approves are those subordinating the woman to the man, and, placing her at his mercy, make her dependent on *his* behaviour.

Now, I can say that scientific experience and the consideration of tens of thousands of cases have made it abundantly clear to me (and I have, I think, converted all in the medical world not hopelessly ossified by preconceived ideas) that for anything other than their temporary use all methods of control of conception depending upon the man are physiologically harmful to a greater or less extent. And I say quite explicitly, even with emphasis, that the various methods

permitted by the authorities of the Church of Rome are physiologically harmful and unnatural. This, moreover, in spite of the fact that her apologists have maintained that she permits in marriage only acts which are natural, and condemns *scientific* control of conception just because she deems it unnatural.

We must therefore consider in some detail exactly what physiological processes are involved in the Roman Catholic methods.

First, to take the "safe" period, or restriction of the coital act to certain specified dates in the month commonly supposed to be infertile. This is a very ancient method, and although it must have been proved fallacious and led to undesired pregnancy incalculable myriads of times, its advocacy persists in clerical and "spinsterish," and even in some old-fashioned medical, circles. It makes an appeal to those who are themselves intellectually active yet physiologically inexperienced, or possessed of somewhat subnormal sex potency. Such people can often say truthfully, as one said to me, that she and her hard-working husband had used it themselves all her married life successfully. But in my opinion that particular couple

would never have had any children had they used any date in the calendar they liked. Advocates of the "safe period" seldom take into account the fact that their successful use of this method has depended not on the reliability of the method as a method, but on the fact that their intellectual activities or general physique rendered them much less liable to fertilisation than the ordinary full-blooded, normal, or peasant type of humanity. In short, the "safe" period is not really safe for other than a small number of individuals. This has been partly recognised by even the Roman Catholic authorities who permit the method. For example, the Reverend Monsignor Canon Brown followed his statement to the Birth-Rate Commission of Rome's permission by a warning, saying: "But this limited use of marriage is not to be put forward as a perfectly safe means of avoiding procreation."

Other Roman Catholics, for example, Dr. Sutherland, who gave such emphatic evidence in favour of the "safe period" in the witness-box, do not show the same knowledge or caution.

It has often been put forward with emphasis by others as though it were a

perfectly safe and reliable method. For example, Lady Barratt, M.D., in her little book (*Conception Control*, 1923) devoted to the subject, with a preface by the late Archbishop of Canterbury. Unfortunately Anglo-Catholic theologians have tended to follow Roman tradition in this matter, as in so many others, and advice on these lines has not only been spread, but held up as admirable by those who condemn more scientific and accurate methods of achieving the end desired by users of the "safe period."

It is this "safe" method which is so subtly permitted in the Papal encyclical. Essentially it depends upon the idea that for a certain number of days in each menstrual month women, having discharged the ovum, are safe from the possibility of impregnation before the succeeding ovum has matured. The length of time of this alleged security varies, or is supposed to vary, with the individual woman—some women having a time of two to four days only, others eight or ten, during which union is supposed to be safe, because they are without an ovum ready for fertilisation. But this theory ignores the possibility of the spermatozoa having a length of life greater than the time interval

of the supposed security. This possibility becomes a fact in quite a large proportion of people, and hence the "safety" vanishes. More detail about this will be found in my comprehensive book, *Contraception: Its Theory, History, and Practice* (3rd edit.).

As the claim is made, that to confine union to those dates when the woman is not potentially fertilisable is natural and therefore right and conformable with the laws of God, one must turn to examine the behaviour of the natural woman and other creatures of her sex. One finds that the female wild animal never permits the entry of her male consort except at special periods when Nature, in order to give effect to the elaborate mechanism which she has evolved, causes her not only to be willing to permit the entry of the male, but even to be desirous of it. The *natural* female animal is a physiologically ripe and a willing partner at the right time, and, contrariwise, will fight for her inviolability and will not permit the entry of the male at the wrong time.

In woman, too, with her potentialities unspoilt and uninjured by the poisons of so-called civilisation, the times and seasons sent to her by Nature are consciously felt,



and her conduct guided by them. The alleged "safe" period, however, comes at a time when Nature does not cause her spontaneous willingness to be a partner to the act of union. Indeed, contrariwise, she would in a natural state not then permit coitus. In that respect, therefore, the use of the so-called "safe" period is unnatural, in that it causes the woman to have imposed upon her at the wrong season the act which should be performed at the right period; and it is furthermore unnatural and physiologically repugnant in that it actually divorces the act from those times and seasons when it is physiologically right that it should take place. Union should be a *rite* when physiologically correctly performed, else it is a desecration. When the "safe period" is used both man and woman are called upon to restrain themselves and to thwart their natural instincts; to wait, it may be, for a fortnight until such an artificial and unnatural thing as a calendar has been consulted, and the appointed date when they think they are safe has arrived. By this time the man's ardour, even his natural requirements may have to some extent subsided, been diverted, or escaped

by a nocturnal overflow; and the woman, differently built, has grown through the phases of her rhythm till at the appointed date she is at a low ebb. Then the Church steps in and says in effect: Now that you are physiologically unsuited for the act which some days ago you needed, craved, and desired, now that you can no longer make this act bloom as a thing of spontaneous beauty, you are permitted to use this desiccated simulacrum of the living act which you desired some time ago.

But when in the same breath the exponents of this physiologically unreal, this abominably deadening and thwarting evasion, profess to give it the blessing of the Church on the plea that it is a *natural* procedure, free from that "wickedness" involved in the use of a simple, scientific method of uniting *at the physiologically right time*, then one must point out explicitly that its unnatural routine has darkened and blackened many lives, quite apart from those who have been misled by its chimeral "safety."

Its advocates ignore also the higher aspects of erogamic love. A human being is not merely an expression of physiological rhythm, and the culmination of natural love

through a stirring of the higher centres springs into activity most often as a result of the blossoming of romantic incidents into spontaneous feeling. If, when these feelings are aroused, the potentially mating pair must then stop to consult a calendar, and must hold their ardour in cold storage to be "released" according to date, how can it be maintained that they are behaving naturally? To allege that they are is such a jesuitical misuse of language that its explicit exposure must surely demolish it.

Father Henry Davis, S.J., in his little book, *Birth Control: The Fallacies of Dr. M. Stopes* (to which the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur* are attached), 1928, while maintaining that this approved method of the "safe period" is "natural if we define our terms correctly," does allow that his co-religionists, clerics, and doctors "are fully aware that the wife probably does not derive the same benefit, nor has the same desire at that period as at other times," though: "They know the facts and they approve of the practice."

If a case had to be made out for the use of the "safe" period, probably a number of married women of an active and energetic

type could be found to come forward and say that in their own experience the "safe" period can be determined, that they have tried to use it as a birth-control measure and they find it satisfactory. But if I subjected them one by one to a searching cross-examination I am confident that each one of them would be found to have an under-sexed husband, or herself would stand revealed as not being cognizant in her own experience of the whole gamut of physiological reaction which takes place with the completed orgasm following acute rousing of the sex sensations at the right time. In short, the women who find the "safe" period reliable are not the ordinary working-class, healthy, simple women, who have no reliable "safe" period at all.

The ordinary woman, trying to utilise the "safe" period, finds herself unwittingly pregnant against her wishes, and then follows the sequence of efforts to rid herself of the pregnancy, all too often culminating either in a child born less perfect in body and soul than it should be, or in a criminally-procured abortion.

The "safe period" proves not only a charnel-house of love's sweetest blossoms, it

deceives those who trust in it repeatedly. *Every* woman who has tried it among those coming to our Clinic has found it fail. What may happen to a trustful Roman Catholic who uses it on the advice of her priest?

In this connection I recall a Roman Catholic wife and mother in whose house I stayed years ago. I tell this true anecdote because it happened years ago, *before* I had begun my campaign for birth control and thus placed myself in open conflict with many of Rome's exponents. In recent years, obviously, I am the recipient of many "wild tales" to test my discrimination. But this dates from a time when there was no reason to beguile me with untruth, and I was in the simple, ordinary relation of "one woman to another." This woman had four children, the youngest seven years old. She was talking about the difficulties she found in not again becoming pregnant. I said to her that as her youngest was seven she must have known some birth-control method, but she expressed extreme horror at the words "birth control." I said I could tell her a perfectly safe and simple method of birth control which would secure her, but she professed intense repugnance at the thought of using anything

so wicked and so utterly against the teaching of her Church as *any* "birth-control" means. I persisted and asked her how it came about that her youngest child was seven years old. She said: "Oh, the priest helped." I asked her what she did. She said she relied upon the permitted method of the "safe period," but it often failed; in fact it had failed three times in the seven years in her own case and often with her friends. I asked: "When it failed, what did you do then?" She said that each time the priest had told her to wait till the third month of the pregnancy and he then gave her some powder. She, the priest, and her husband went down to the bottom of the garden, she climbed the apple tree and jumped off it, and the priest and her husband carried her back to the house.

It must not be imagined that I imply that *all* priests would do for a woman "in trouble" what this priest did: many would not be told what was going on, some would now send suitable women in time (*before* conception) to a birth-control clinic, others enforce strict obedience on their flock! But one may well ask oneself what does happen in Roman Catholic homes where the permitted safe period has been trusted and has failed.

Father Davis, in his book, *Birth Control: Fallacies of Dr. Marie Stopes* (1928), dealing with my point about the unnaturalness of the use of the "safe" period, quoted my words that it is "quite an unnatural method, for no natural female animal allows the male entry when she is not on 'heat.'" And answered me: "That statement may be true, but it is true because such animals are so constituted and nature's instinct in them urges them so to act. But man, on the other hand, rules his instinctive tendencies by reason. Woman is not constituted as the brute animals are, for it will be conceded that the wife may legitimately and naturally desire the lawful act for love, divorced from all sexual appetite or to please her husband or—let it be said with delicacy—to keep a husband faithful. We say that since such things can happen—and it is a reasonable assumption to make—Dr. Stopes would have to admit that the wife was then acting most naturally in one sense and in the truest sense, though in another sense unnaturally, in that she was acting contrary to her physical and sexual inclinations at the moment." But if one accepts this argument, is it not an equally reasonable assumption to make that

a husband might be revolted by his knowledge that his wife was going contrary to her natural sex inclination? And this would as much as anything else drive him into the arms of a prostitute? I have known such cases. They afford a position hardly to be viewed with approval by the Church. Again, can one not say that the woman, knowing that this is likely to be so, is acting more naturally (and hence more virtuously) if she chooses to place within herself a small, soft, harmless shield of a purely natural product which has no destructive effect upon the spermatozoid, does herself no injury, and when properly used only places a barrier across the door of the womb, so that the man's act of union may be entirely naturally performed at the right time and spermatozoa deposited in the natural place, the vaginal canal? Later, perhaps the next day (for these minute organisms, though travelling fast in proportion to their size, yet cover appreciable distances very slowly), when a spermatozoon from the discharged seminal fluid, long after the coital act, may find itself swimming to the spot where it might have continued its journey into the uterus, it is deflected from its course by an impenetrable



soft barrier only so far as to make it continue to travel on the vaginal wall where it was deposited naturally in the coital act. Surely to claim that this is unnatural, after allowing the procedure quoted by Father Davis to be "natural," forces Rome to balance her colossal weight on a knife edge.

I do not hope, however, to convert Rome to the use of the *best* contraceptive methods immediately, but with time and truth on my side the future is inevitable, and it is proving uncomfortable and difficult for Romanists to balance on their knife edge now that its tenuity is being exposed.

#### "SELF-CONTROL."

Many a time in the earlier days of my public meetings on the subject of birth control, members of the audience in discussion, or opponents in debate, used to rise against me and in sanctified tones condemn me and my work and the teaching of science wholesale. I had carried the audiences with me so completely, wringing their hearts over the sufferings of the potential mother who was diseased or delicate, so that they had to agree with my humane object, namely, that of sparing mothers the physical pain and

mental agony of undesired and unwanted children. Then some one would rise and say that this object could be achieved, indeed should be achieved, but only by the higher and nobler means of "self-control."

This often used to carry the audiences over to the other side, and sanctimonious virtue seemed triumphant until rumours began to reach me of what complexity lay behind this apparently clear position. Details percolated about the private lives of some of the married exponents and virtuous supporters of "self-control." I had imagined, and the majority in the audiences who had supported them imagined also, that by demanding the use of "self-control" the priest or perfectionist was making an appeal to a higher morality, to physiological perfection, to a greater power than that displayed by any of the much-abused advocates of scientific control of conception; that self-control had meant to him, as to us, the refraining from the coital act, in short what is more accurately known as *abstinence*. If it became apparent that the wife required a long interval between the birth of her children in the interests of her health, or even if it became necessary that she should

bear no more children at all, then the exponents of the virtue of "self-control" confidently assured me and the audiences that this was possible without injury for many years at a stretch. But when I began to look further into the question I discovered that the words "self-control," according to the individual (but with no outward indication that this was so), implied at least three totally different things.

The Reverend A., for instance, by "self-control" meant what I and the general public, hearing him, thought he meant, namely, total abstinence or refraining from the use of marriage though within its legal tie. By "self-control" the Reverend B. (one found by searching questions) did not mean this real self-control or abstinence in marriage, but the control of the pair according to the calendar, and therefore use of the "safe period," of which we just have spoken. But the Reverend C. employed the same words for a totally different form of "self-control," and this was the "self-control" which astonished me and which I think was not, and still is not, in the least suspected by the majority of the good women in any audience who applaud the noble sentiments

of the claimant of this kind of "self-control." This form of "self-control" I discovered was also a well-known method of birth control, going by a great variety of names according to the sect or the bias of those practising it. *Coitus reservatus* is its most accurate and unemotional name. (See also p. 60.)

What, then, is this form of "self-control"? So long as the anatomical and physical facts involved in coitus itself or in the use of contraceptives were shrouded in a shamefaced manner by hazy fog and indefinite reference, it was possible to blur the clarity of the moral issues with that of the actual facts: but if in the clear light of day one inquires with exactitude what is *coitus reservatus*, this noble "self-control" permitted by the Church, one finds that it is a practice which the majority of normal straightforward people would consider unnatural, even almost perverted, and which physiologists and neurologists find is extremely detrimental to the nervous system. It is a form of coitus usable at any time, in which after the normal entry of the male into the female a degree of passivity, unusual and generally self-enforced, makes possible the continued conjunction of the pair without the natural

physiological sequence leading to the resolution of the nervous strain in a normal ejaculation. That is to say, that they unite in normal fashion, but that they remain united in a slightly abnormal fashion, and that they separate without the normal orgasm, that is, in an entirely abnormal fashion. Yet the leading theologians of the Church of Rome do not find it unnatural!

*Coitus reservatus*, as Father Henry Davis wrote to me, is permitted by the Church of Rome. Fr. Salter, a leading theologian of the Church of Rome and the author of the text-book, *Moral Theology*, permits and explains in detail how the permission of the Church is granted to *coitus reservatus*.

Father Davis said: "As to *coitus reservatus*, I do not agree with you that it is unnatural if both husband and wife desire it. I do not see how you could prove it to be unnatural."

In the more recent work of J. A. McHugh and C. J. Callan, *Moral Theology, A Complete Course* (1930, New York) we read among the Latin notes: "Non habetur onanismus, nec peccatum, si copula abrumpitur, ex necessitate (v.g. ad vitandem scandalum personae inopinate supervenientis) vel ex utilitate mutuo dato consensu et periculo pollutionis

excluso; nam seminatio extra vas aut involuntaria est, aut nulla."

When, however, this identical method is mentioned under another of its many names, for example, Karezza, a form of reference which was prevalent in cultivated America a generation ago, and which in an appendix note I mentioned in my book, *Married Love*, to what virulent abuse was I not subjected by Roman Catholics in the Law Courts! Educated Roman Catholics were apparently so ignorant, not only of what is permitted by their own Church, but of general terminology, that the very method sanctified by the *Imprimatur* of Rome was held by them, just because it was mentioned incidentally by me under this American name, to be an illustration of my own depravity and general wickedness!

In the famous case between myself and the Roman Catholic, Dr. Sutherland, legal counsel on behalf of the Roman Catholic party, he could not express himself in mere words, but, red in the face, holding from him my book in which a few lines mentioned the subject in the appendix, he threw the book down and invited the jury to express their utter abhorrence and detestation of the

perversion which I dared to mention therein. My defence was in the hands of the extremely eminent and charming barrister, Mr. Hastings (now Sir Patrick Hastings, for some time Attorney-General). He conducted my case admirably, but unfortunately he did not in cross-examination put details as to this and some other points to the witnesses in the way that I should myself have done, with the result that the jury did not appreciate these facts which might have been made abundantly plain at the time and would have spared some years of heated controversy ever since. Had I been permitted to jump up there and then and say in Court: "Karezza is only another name for that method your own Roman Church calls *coitus reservatus*, which your own theologians *permit* and call *natural*," I might have been saved the obloquy which followed me to the House of Lords, where "Karezza" was made a damaging point at the very opening of the Appeal there.

In his speech to the jury on behalf of the Roman Catholic Dr. Sutherland, his Counsel again spoke of "Karezza," so briefly mentioned in *Married Love*, saying: "Do you suppose that if I had read out that horrible

bit about what is called 'Karezza,' " he would be reported in the Press. . . "For a good reason: that it would mislead and damage the morale of those who read it. It is obscene stuff. No more, no less; it is obscene stuff, and I am not ashamed to say it as strongly as that."

And what had I said in *Married Love* about it?—that "The essence of the idea of 'Karezza' is the power of man to control by will and thought a reaction which is so generally looked upon as physical and almost involuntary." Is not this just in line with the teaching of the Church of Rome? Yet in the House of Lords, as my Roman adversaries had "got away" with their abuse uncorrected in the lower court they created odium against me at once by requesting the Lords that they should read various passages, including this on "Karezza" on page 190 (10th edit.).

It should have been shown up in the first Court of Law that "Karezza" is identical with *coitus reservatus*, permitted by Rome's theologians with the *official Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*.

"CONTINENCE."

How often, too, was I silenced a few years



ago and audiences led astray by the sanctimonious male who got up "in the name of morality" or "a higher Power," or made some similar appeal, and claimed that all birth-control wickedness was unnecessary, "and the only right thing was *continence*." It was years before I discovered how often his "continence" did not mean refraining from union as the *word* implies, but meant for him only another name for this same *coitus reservatus*.

This confusion is possible because, under the name of "male continence," the very same method was popularised in the Oneida Colony by John Noyes, and discussed under the name of "continence" by itself; it has on many occasions in wordy combats with me been held aloft as a virtuous thing, for true continence has Biblical, nay almost universal, approval.

It seems strange, indeed, that when one is dealing with clerics, and finds them using the word "continence," one must make searching inquiry to find out from them whether they mean *real* continence, real refraining from sex union, or merely some unnatural form of coitus which is distinguished under the name of "male continence."

Under the name of "magnetation," again, another group of people applaud this same type of somewhat abnormal union.

So disguised under its various names has this practice been and so apt to be utilised by those making the most impressive outward show of religious virtue, that its nervous reaction had not been studied with very much detail, nor does it appear very often in the literature of science or medicine. But a medical man in 1906 in St. Louis, America, clearly recognised the two forms of abnormal coitus, namely, *coitus interruptus* and *coitus reservatus*, both as causes of neuroses and nervous injury, and he considered *coitus reservatus* (the one approved by Rome) as the more disastrous of the two.

Now *coitus interruptus*, better and more popularly known as the sin of Onan, claimed by many Roman Catholics in debate and argument to be so terribly and mortally a sin that God slew Onan because he practised it, differs, from the point of view of the ordinary person, by only a hairbreadth from *coitus reservatus*. One must, therefore, for the sake of making clear the real significance of the method approved by Rome, make it also clear what is the exact nature of

the method disapproved. *Coitus interruptus*, like *coitus reservatus*, includes ordinary and normal penetration of the woman by the man. It may include the slightly abnormal passivity to retard if possible the natural orgasm, and it includes that degree of nervous interference with the normal physiological reaction which is sufficient to ensure that the orgasm does not take place while the man is still within the woman, but that he withdraws, as it is popularly called. In *coitus interruptus* the man withdraws just in time for the ejaculation to take place *outside* instead of inside the vagina wall. In *coitus reservatus* (the mode approved) no ejaculation is supposed to take place. But observe how subtle is the Roman Catholic theological mind. Slater quite explicitly (see p. 61) sets up the argument that if a man *intends* to indulge in *coitus reservatus* and to have no ejaculation, and if then, by accident and without express desire and beyond his intention or will, an ejaculation takes place after the male organ has just left the female, that then no sin has been committed! Whereas, on the other hand, *coitus interruptus*, which is identical in every physical respect with such faulty *coitus reservatus*, because when it

is undertaken it is the man's intention to allow an orgasm with ejaculation (pollution) *after* he has left the woman, for this reason becomes a mortal sin. Such a fine distinction between that which is permitted and that which is a mortal sin amazes the straightforward Protestant or scientific mind, and it must be examined further. A careful study of the main position of the Church of Rome in these matters shows that it is the seminal emission or, as they describe it, the *pollution*, whether it is intentional or accidental, which forms the dividing line between these entirely similar, and from every rational point of view, abnormal processes.

## CHAPTER IV

### ROME'S BALANCE ON THE KNIFE EDGE

THOUGHT has moved forward so rapidly in the last decade that every few months sees some new phase in the clash of ideals. The march of new ideals proceeds against the stronghold wherein the truth lay concealed as in a dungeon. A fresh phase of the conflict was reached when a very important book, *The Morality of Birth Control and Kindred Sex Subjects, a Handbook of Moral Pathology for Clergy, Ministers, and Social Workers*, written by A Priest of the Church of England, was published by Bale & Danielsson, in London, in 1934.

The author of this meticulously detailed analysis and comparison of the teaching of the Anglo-Catholic and Roman Catholic sections of Christianity bearing on birth control is so thorough and searching that there is no need to recapitulate his detail.

Unfortunately, such a serious and exhaustive work does not attract a very large number of readers, hence it is still not so well known as it should be. The main theme of the book is the question: "Is birth control sinful, *per se*?" The answer emerges, after thorough sifting of all the subtleties of Jesuitry, of tradition, and authority, that even for Rome, birth control, in itself, is *not* sinful.

This essential point found confirmation even in the Papal Encyclical on marriage, wherein the use of the safe period is subtly, though expressly, permitted. Contraceptives—that is, chemicals to destroy the spermatozoa—or rubber, or other apparatus deliberately used, are condemned by Rome. Total abstinence, though condemned in general as a practice in marriage, is permitted as a birth-control measure. Then we come to the most intriguing consideration of all, that of the two cognate methods so closely similar that to the lay mind the difference between them is difficult even to define. On the one side of this knife-edge of distinction is the man who, by the use of *coitus interruptus*, falls into mortal sin, and on the other the man who by the use of *coitus reservatus* which, without his wish or previous

intention, has led to external ejaculation, yet is, nevertheless, sinless.

Yet on this infinitely fine knife-edge is balanced the whole weight of the Church of Rome, for in the last analysis its position about birth control crystallises itself in the moral distinction between these two so similar modes of procedure.

Some one may here argue that *coitus reservatus* is not mentioned in the Papal Encyclical—but that is not necessary, for it is considered by Roman theologians to be a *natural* method of coitus, and therefore is covered by Pope's words exhorting the faithful to use only *natural* coitus.

A small book, *Birth Control: The Fallacies of Dr. Marie Stopes*, by Henry Davis, S.J., 1928, then presented a new position. It boils down in essence to the contention that Rome condemns all methods of birth control, because those methods of birth control which Rome permits are *not* birth control! This very subtle point will be touched on in the chapter dealing with the writ I served on Cardinal Bourne, in reference to the allegation in the *Tablet* that I was prevaricating about this matter. An immense therint of detail might be presented and

discussed here, but I will spare the reader, for the essential point which emerges is that the sweeping condemnations of birth control such as are quoted on page 1, and are still prevalent, will have to cease, and Rome's new position, not yet clarified or quite explicitly stated to her masses (although it has been adumbrated for the intelligentsia) doubtless will shortly be her next retreat in this argument. It must inevitably be the realisation that birth control by unscientific means is permitted by Rome, but birth control by scientific methods is still condemned by her as a sin.

Clearly she dare not yet present her position so frankly, and doubtless she will press her claim that her methods are "natural" and good, and scientific methods are unnatural and wicked. But she cannot be allowed to hide long in such a fog, for the issue is of too great importance to the world at large. We must examine in still further detail her permitted and alleged "natural" method of *coitus reservatus*.

The "Priest of the Church of England" devoted a considerable amount of attention to the consideration of the vital moral difference between *reservatus* and *interruptus*.



His pages should be read carefully by real students. Let me say merely that, in essence, it appears that the intention in *coitus interruptus* is not the intention to prevent offspring being generated by the particular act of union when this method is used, but instead that, consciously and deliberately, emission outside the vagina shall take place, and that such emission is a pollution, and is, in itself, a sin, so that the sinful element in *coitus interruptus* is the pollution, and not the birth-control intention; for in *coitus reservatus*, where no pollution takes place voluntarily, or with deliberate intention, the complete marital act, and the use and enjoyment of all its sensual delight, is sinless, though it is accompanied by a deliberate intention to use the method of *coitus reservatus* as a birth-control method, and prevent procreation.

So, finally, when we ask what is sinful birth control and what sinless, we come down to a very subtle distinction depending only on the *conscious intention* at the back of a man's mind. If he *intended* entirely to contain himself so that there was no subsequent external emission or pollution, but nevertheless there took place some chance weakening of the physical equipment beyond his control,

and against his own wish, and thus there was an external extra-vaginal emission, or pollution, he remains sinless, because it was not his original intention that it should arise. But it is undeniable that although these methods of conducting union in marriage are birth-control methods, and make possible the enjoyment of the sensual pleasure of coitus without the consequent pregnancy normally to be anticipated from a completely natural act of union, neither of these methods are employed accidentally, and they are only "self-control" in a subtle and complicated sense not anticipated by the ordinary layman, and only revealed to the considerable astonishment of the public by persistent and searching interrogation and probing.

A decade ago, when I debated these points on public platforms I inevitably encountered the argument that all birth control was condemned because we were told in the Bible God slew Onan for this sin. Since it was so fully dealt with by the Priest in *The Morality of Birth Control*, Onan is not now often mentioned, so a detailed analysis of Onan's sin is not necessary here. Essentially Onan's sin, being *coitus interruptus* on its birth-control side, and the refusal to make

his brother's widow pregnant on its social side, it does not essentially concern us any longer, for scientists now universally agree with me in the condemnation of *coitus interruptus* as a birth-control measure, which I clarified and simplified on a physiological basis in 1918; and as the Church of Rome also entirely condemns it, *coitus interruptus* and the sin of Onan can go out of our consideration of birth-control methods. Rome and I agree it is *bad*.

The reason one has still to say a good deal about it is that it remains as a perilous precipice on the one side of this knife edge where the virtuous Roman Catholic can use *coitus reservatus* with impunity on the other. The Roman Catholic theologian, Father Slater, deals with this, and his standard works are quoted by the "Priest of the Church of England," from whom I will quote (page 65): "Logically it follows from Roman Catholic moral theology, that Onan's sin was not in the prevention of conception *per se*, for he might have practised '*coitus reservatus*.'"

It is as well, I think, to set out quite clearly what is permitted in marriage in Slater's *Moral Theology of Rome*, for it is an

important work in two volumes, printed by the printers to the Holy Apostolic See with the official *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*, and is recognised as authoritative by educated Roman Catholics. Quoting from *The Morality of Birth Control*, page 63:

“(A). PERMISSIONS:—(1) It allows the married, by ‘impudicis’ looks and touches to excite the sexual act (Slater, vol. ii. p. 362).”

“(2) It allows ‘*coitus interruptus*’ or ‘withdrawal,’ if there be no ejaculation or emission of seminal fluid, if the wife consents, this we shall call “*coitus reservatus*” (Slater, vol. ii. p. 363).”

“(3) It allows a wife, if she has not experienced her orgasm, to complete the act with the hand (*i.e.* by touches) after her husband’s withdrawal *in any case* (*i.e.* after ‘*coitus* proper,’ ‘*coitus reservatus*,’ or ‘*coitus interruptus*’)” (Slater, vol. ii. pp. 362 and 363).”

As, of course, a great many of those who desire to use contraceptives do so from the very highest motives, with the knowledge that if they did not do so they might procreate a child who would be inevitably diseased, and tainted, their *intention* is good.

Concerning this, let me quote the position of Rome as presented in the same book, page 90: "Is it morally right to bring a child into the world if either parent be suffering from venereal disease? Numbers are born to blindness because the mother is infected with gonorrhea, and in the case of syphilis the sins of the parents are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."

Let us see what Roman Catholic moral theology permits in a postulated case of disease. "To foster conjugal affection, and also rather than that the diseased person should run the risk of incontinence, it permits the marriage debt being paid by the healthy partner, but sets its face like a flint against contraceptives in any circumstances (*vide infra*)."

The wording which permits the marital act by a person infected with disease is as follows:—"It seems permissible to deny the right even to a half-drunk man asking for it, especially owing to the risk of serious physical and moral failings in the possible begetting of offspring, *'unless thereby need be feared quarrelling, dissension, and incontinence on the part of him who asks.'*"

"It is said if these circumstances be present there is no obligation to return the debt, rather, *per se*, it would be unlawful to return the debt with proximate danger of life or mind."

"Nevertheless if there were a disease protracted but not immediately likely to be fatal, *e.g.* SYPHILIS, it is permissible for a healthy person to 'pay the due,' THOUGH INCURRING THE RISK OF INFECTION, IN ORDER TO AVOID INCONTINENCE, OR TO FOSTER CONJUGAL LOVE" (Slater, vol. ii. pp. 361 and 362)."

The archaic view that the risk of incontinence is more serious than the risk of bringing a diseased and horrible life into existence certainly wants revision. It originated in the days before scientific knowledge made clear the nature and the mode of combating the racially destructive diseases. But we must not now be led away from our main theme into the consideration of the treatment of sex diseases in general. The above permission illustrates vividly the racial dangers involved until Rome's archaic moral code be found to be elastic enough to include that sense of responsibility to the State, and to the race, inevitably developed by really adult minds of to-day.

After considering the above authoritative statement of the official teaching of the Church of Rome, it seems indeed strange to read in the *Catholic Times*, so recently as 13th February 1931, in an article on the modern attack on marriage, by the Reverend Henry Davis, S.J.: "Catholics condemn 'birth control' under all circumstances," going on: "When the primary purpose of marriage can be realised on a given occasion, to prevent that purpose from being realised by means of an artifice is to use the function given by God, but to use it only for a selfish personal gratification to the actual exclusion of the Divine purpose. This is to thwart the Divine intention, and is a sin."

Let me try to simplify much elaborate and difficult argument and arrive at a correct conclusion regarding their teaching about this matter: If the somewhat abnormal act of coitus is undertaken with the *intention* of an external ejaculation (pollution) it is a deadly sin. If exactly the same process is undergone with the *intention of carrying on the abnormality* to the point at which no ejaculation at all is allowed, then the abnormal act is permitted by the Church of Rome; and further, if the strength of the man fails and

he lapses into the natural reactions of coitus, and there is an external emission following what was intended to be a coital act without emission, then the man is held to be blameless and not to have committed a mortal sin!

How even the man himself can be sure whether he has sinned, as did Onan, a mortal sin, or whether he has endeavoured to conform to that which is permitted by his Church, and weakly overcome by the flesh has failed but not committed a sin, is a matter to exercise the minds of confessors and penitents alike.

The truth is that the mighty organisation of Rome, with its hydra-headed "intelligentsia," linked to its colossal lower members, is writhing in the contortions resulting from a frantic effort to keep her simple masses ignorant of the true significance of her subtle teaching, which permits her upper classes and intelligentsia to control their numbers by these means defined by Rome as "natural." Even to-day, after some years of public controversy, the vast majority of simple Roman Catholics remain ignorant of the teaching of their own Church in this matter, and their women continue to bear



children helplessly, in fulfilment of the "will of God."

One sees the predicament of Rome, for if her masses freely use even the permitted Roman Catholic methods, though they are not very efficient, they will, nevertheless, do a great deal to reduce the teeming numbers on which Rome at present builds her strength. So it is not surprising to hear of the frantic efforts of priests to close down discussion by the untrammelled mind in its endeavour to clear up this much-befogged subject. Father Davis expressed his resentment of such efforts when he said: Catholics "object, furthermore, to this subject of contraception being almost the staple subject of conversation in shops, factories, and streets" (*Catholic Times*, 13th February 1931).

A new phase in the controversy was entered into in September 1932, when Father Henry Davis published the substance of his address on contraception to the International Conference: "*Pour la vie et la famille*." It is highly significant that he opens by explaining that "By contraception is here meant what is usually spoken of as birth control, namely, the particular form of the prevention of conception that is effected by

the employment of either mechanical or chemical means; mechanical means, namely, the means whereby the fertilising factor in conception is precluded from access to that which might be fertilised; chemical means, namely, the means whereby the fertilising factor is devitalised. There are, of course, other methods of positively and actively preventing conception, though not in common use. Such are the employment of the Gräfenberg ring, irradiation by X-rays, and sterilisation. These are rather indirect methods of contraception. It is not proposed to consider any other methods than those mentioned above. The ethical argument against the use of the common contraceptives is not quite the same as that against the three methods just named." Does this last remarkable sentence adumbrate the future acceptance by the Church of Rome of the Gräfenberg ring and similar devices? To describe such methods as "rather indirect methods of contraception" is curious, but as the *intention* of the user is definitely and deliberately to prevent procreation, and as we have seen above it is the intention alone which indicates that subtle distinction between *coitus reservatus* and *coitus interruptus*,

the intention here too must itself be the actual dividing line between a grievous sin and innocence. This whole paragraph is indeed an extraordinary and suggestive one, and the further development of the Roman Catholic attitude towards scientific contraception will be awaited with increased interest since this has been published.

Father Davis then sets out some of the poignant reasons considered by husbands and wives when deciding that they must not add to their family, and he follows this by the most uncompromising pronouncement—not against birth control, for that no longer dare the Church of Rome claim to condemn in its entirety—but against the use of scientific contraceptives. He says: “If a most perfect and harmless contraceptive were discovered, and if married people had, in fact, families large enough to secure the permanence of the State, and if contraception could effectually stamp out all economic hardship, even then, husband and wife would never be justified, not even on one occasion, in employing a contraceptive for any reason whatsoever, because the moral law would be violated if they did so, the laws of their nature would have been set aside, they would have ceased

to act rationally, *i.e.* in accordance with their natural tendency towards the good of their nature. The sanction of the moral law would have gone; and if gone in one point, why not in all?"

With a sublime disregard of the workings of the average intelligent mind, only two paragraphs farther on Father Davis says: "Now we are endowed with a nature that has to be guided by reason." Later on he says: "If he is rational, may he use his sexual function even once in such a way that in the very use of it he positively thwarts its chief purpose? No, not even once may he do so. In the supposition that he is married, if he uses a mechanical contrivance to prevent conception, is he different from the man who practices unnatural vice?"

In this rhetorical question, is not Father Davis answered by his own theologians, Slater and others, and more recently by his own Pope, who permits people the use of an unnatural contrivance like a calendar so that they may enjoy their sex functions not only once but regularly in such a way that positively thwarts its chief purpose? So that when Father Davis concludes this paragraph with: "The contraceptive act is just a sexual

perversion," one can only reply that if Father Davis's words are to be taken in their proper dictionary meaning, he is saying that which is untrue.

But surely they must be taken as the rhetoric of a man who wishes to sway a multitude of ignorant people in a direction which he thinks advisable. It would be better for his flock if he studied physiology and biological history, and realised that the *primary* function of sex is not that on which he bases his whole edifice of argument. Sex is not primarily procreative, sex evolved primarily in the interests of the conjoining individual, and the reproductive function was a later evolution. To-day the functions of sex union are not less than threefold: (1) A highly subtle and complicated intellectual and spiritual mingling of man and woman. (2) A physical enrichment, enjoyment, and benefit to both from the absorption of secretions' each from the other, not only nourishing and enriching, but resolving contentions and difficulties, curing sleeplessness, irritability, and many minor ailments and difficulties of marital life. The glandular secretions effecting these manifold results are not concerned with the formation of an embryo.

They are distinct secretions outflowing at the same time, but quite non-essential to the third function of sex union. (3) That the act of union leads to and makes possible the meeting of the male element or spermatozoid, with the female element or ovum; their meeting generally leads to the entry of the ovum by the spermatozoid. Thereafter elaborate nuclear devices result in the formation of a new life or embryo. This third and last function can be entirely separated from the other functions in a great many ways; all, however various their mode of action, are "birth control."

## CHAPTER V

### COBICS FOR CATHOLICS: A REALLY NATURAL METHOD

FATHER DAVIS, only a few months ago (reported in the *Oxford Mail* for 18th May 1932), put forward arguments which he claimed were valid from the ethical point of view against contraception, and simultaneously emphasised the ethical rule that husband and wife must act in subordination to the race when they exercise their legitimate sex functions; and a mother who now finally considered that she should have only one child, was to be as much honoured as she who had many, had her decision been made seriously with forethought for the community as a whole. And, as we see, priests have said that the Church of Rome claims to teach birth control itself, so that really the only question in dispute is the physiological and medical detail of the method to be employed.

The use of the "safe period," the use of *coitus reservatus* and others discussed in the last chapter, have always been permitted by the theological authorities in Rome; because she has been under the impression that she was permitting "natural" methods which allowed perfectly normal and natural coitus.

But now modern science irrefutably demonstrates that Rome was in error in thinking the methods she permits "natural," and in error in thinking them harmless. The Pope's latest Encyclical reiterates and emphasises the demand on the Roman Catholic for *natural* coitus. Such a demand is perfectly logical, and if she would clearly maintain it, no one could deny Rome's rectitude in doing so. The unfortunate thing for Rome's arguments at present is, however, the indubitable scientific fact that her approved methods do not actually come up to her own definition of the standard requisite for her own approval. Are we to conclude then, that there is no birth-control method allowing perfectly normal coitus, and which, therefore, can be completely in harmony both with Rome's demands and the highest scientific teaching of the day?



Fortunately there is a method which does not involve the use of any chemical or any barrier of rubber or other substance which interferes with the act of union, or which has to be used directly after union, so as to destroy the likelihood of the natural effects of the union. It is, moreover, an indirect method, primarily used for quite another purpose, so it does not involve the Roman Catholic in the direct *intention* to control pregnancy. It is new, but it meets the ancient requirements of the Church of Rome that the acts of coitus of her members shall be complete and entirely natural.

As the primary object of the use of this lubricant is to improve normal coitus and render it more natural, and only its secondary function may result in controlling pregnancy, its use is in conformity with the rules of the Church of Rome. As set out by one of her most recent exponents with the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*, dated 1931, by Dr. de Guchteneere, in *Judgment on Birth Control*, we read: "It is allowable to seek the secondary ends of marriage, especially the advantages accruing from the sex act, only so long as its proper end is respected and no obstacle deliberately placed in its way."

“It matters little that the act should happen (*per accidens*) not to achieve its object, for the natural law considers the conditions and qualities deriving from the nature of things (*per se*) and not those that are accidental to them (St. Thomas, *Contra Gentiles*, liii. 122).”

I have thought deeply about the subject for a very long time, and analysing the whole position searchingly, with my knowledge of science as well as my sympathy towards the moral and ethical points of view, I have thought out a procedure completely in conformity with the Pope's most explicit demands that union shall be entirely natural, and that no deliberate action shall be directed to the destruction of the fertilising element.

There are several points in the physiological act of union among modern people which give rise to difficulties not experienced by primitive people. One, for instance, and a very common one, is the lack of natural lubrication on the part of a large proportion of city-dwelling women, who do not experience that robust and buoyant health enjoyed by the simpler woman dwelling in country sunshine. The lack of a natural and spontaneous lubrication immediately

prior to the husband's entry in intercourse has a variety of effects which may cause very far-reaching psychological as well as physical minor injuries. For instance, the localised unreadiness causes some sense of irritation, perhaps even actual pain due to the consequent unnaturally excessive friction which cannot be avoided unless the lubrication is present as Nature arranges normally. Hence a great many couples find a lubricant valuable, or even essential, in order to promote normal and happy sex intercourse. As perfectly normal sex intercourse is blessed and recommended by all Catholic teachers from the Pope downwards, that which enhances the quality of completeness and naturalness of union must be wholly good in Catholic eyes.

I have studied lubricants, and have come to the conclusion that they, and indeed anything else entering the vaginal canal (lined as it is with an epithelium as delicate and absorptive as that of the mouth) should be as bland and indeed of the same general nature as anything entering the mouth. I coined a kind of slogan, as this cannot be too strongly emphasised in these days when pernicious and even poisonous drugs are

often advised for use in the vagina. My general advice may be crystallised thus : "Put nothing into the vagina that you would not risk putting into the mouth." The lubricating substance has to be applied, and the convenience of application is also a factor to consider. To secure all these ends I have found that a specially prepared and purified fat, namely, that we eat so freely in chocolate, is the best for the great majority who need a lubricant to secure a perfectly normal act of union. The previous placing of a small piece of this purified chocolate fat lubricates the essential tract. It is so made that though it melts readily after it has been in place high up in the vagina, it remains solid outside in ordinary temperatures; hence it is much more convenient to use than vaseline or oil, which are messy externally and in other respects are not so natural in their effects. A woman who makes a regular practice of using such a small piece of lubricant before each act of union as a routine secures a natural and wholesome union without further thought. If she depends on this routine, she need not recall that a second end is also achieved, and that the use of this grease will probably not destroy

the spermatozoa, but minimise their activity so that they will not travel higher than the entry of the womb. She is not, however, taking any active step for their destruction, nor using any unnatural chemical or artificial contraceptive. So that it appears that a Roman Catholic woman could, with perfect propriety, use this special preparation of grease for lubrication and know that while doing so she is absolutely fulfilling the Pope's demand that when using the marriage act of union she does it so as to have a perfectly natural coitus.

It is true that she may be desirous of bearing a child as the result of some particular union. In that event she would be best advised not to use any greasy lubricant, not even the universally recommended vaseline; because any greasy lubricant reduces the probability of a child being conceived. A woman, desiring a child from any particular union should not use any lubricant whatever for that union.

Differing from the majority, some women have difficulty in conceiving, and a woman may find herself in a curious quandary: desiring to have a perfectly normal union it may necessitate a greasy lubricant to achieve

it, yet desiring pregnancy as a result of the union, she may find that the use of the grease deters it. What then is she to do?—have a frictional, hence painful and, therefore, slightly unnatural act of union in order to secure the natural product of a child? Yet though contradictory as it may seem, such dilemmas arise among modern civilised women and men, where civilisation preserves so many variations in the race. It is extraordinary how “unnatural” are the things some cultivated people have to do in order to secure a child at all.

The problems, however, of those who do not find themselves able to become parents are not the subject of this book.

But when dealing searchingly with the full meaning of the word “natural,” one with my experience sees a vista of intricate complexity in this connection which is the result of knowledge about the upper and middle classes. For the average woman, of course, becoming pregnant is a comparatively simple thing, although for the average woman the complete enjoyment of a really natural and satisfying orgasm in sex union is, I should say, the exception rather than the rule. To assist all women, including Roman Catholics, to

have this natural and happy and complete union, I have made the special lubricant which we call "Cobic" available, and they can be got at the C.B.C. Society's Clinic,<sup>1</sup> 108 Whitfield Street, W.1.,<sup>2</sup> where they have already been sold to Roman Catholic women who have greatly appreciated them. They have been advertised in the Roman Catholic press, and they meet a very real and urgent Roman Catholic need.

This purely natural lubricant should make many women's married lives happier. I hope also that it may assist the Church to get from its women effective obedience about their conduct of marriage, so that they secure that natural completeness which is so important in Rome's eyes, and which the dilemmas facing Catholic women for years past have made it difficult, indeed impossible, for them to secure. Cobics for Catholics should solve many difficulties both for the women themselves and for their theological advisers.

<sup>1</sup> It may be mentioned that *all* aspects of marriage are dealt with at the C.B.C. Clinic; it need not be shunned by those who fear birth control, for many a sterile woman has come, and we have helped her to get the child she longed for but could not attain without our aid.

<sup>2</sup> No private gain is made by any one from these things, what small profits there are go to the charitable work of assisting poor women with medical and nurses' help

## PART II

### CHAPTER VI

#### CARDINAL BOURNE AND LAMBETH

THAT the theological advisers and the priesthood of Rome have had to face very considerable difficulties, is apparent.

An illuminating paragraph appears in the pamphlet *Christian Marriages and the Limitation of the Family*, bearing the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur* of Rome, which is of sufficient interest to quote. A woman "asks some Catholic friend why neo-Malthusianism is wrong, hinting that the Church is old-fashioned in forbidding it." . . . "Finally, the modern Eve asks the priest in the confessional. The priest replies with the logical reasoning that he has learnt in his moral philosophy with the authority of the Church behind him; but his answer, admirable for those who have received even an elementary training in the methods and language of



philosophy, conveys no definite meaning to Eve, and she thinks it old-fashioned and pedantic."

"But, if she were given the full explanation in the simplest language of modern life and shown how utterly degrading the practices of neo-Malthusianism must be, she would, provided she were a normally nice-minded woman, turn from these practices with the deepest loathing and disgust."

It will be enlightening to follow Rome in her difficulties and her arguments for the last few years.

The strongest plank in the platform of Roman Catholicism against the use of scientific contraception has been the sweeping statement that it is "anti-Christian" and "against the laws of God." These generalised statements, elaborated and embroidered in many ways, form the basis of the Clerical attack.

Owing to the reactionary nature of the 1920 Report of the Anglican Bishops at Lambeth, Cardinal Bourne, as the head of the English Roman Catholics, was for ten years able to present a plausible case when he claimed that the Christian Churches were united on this main point, namely, their

total condemnation of the practice of birth control.

But in 1930 the position altered. The organisation of the Society for Constructive Birth Control and Racial Progress, the decade of work by our Clinic and its followers had made itself felt. Medical opinion had advanced.

My book, *Mother England*, written, not by myself, but by the tragic mothers who had pilgrimaged to our Clinic, or written to us in despair unable to come there, is, as Arnold Bennett said, "rather awful in the right sense." Robert Blatchford called it: "A terrible book"; and the *Yorkshire Post* said: "A more powerful comment on conditions prevailing among large numbers of the mothers of this country than any official reports or unofficial propaganda so far made available to the public." It stands as a history of that tragic section of the "civilised" community of the early part of the twentieth century which has had no historian.

A copy was sent to every Bishop attending the Lambeth Conference in 1930. It could not fail to touch all hearts not made of stone, and it touched the hearts of the Bishops at Lambeth, who had been moved also in many

different ways during the preceding ten years. They had been brought to realise the necessity for revising medieval dogmas in the light of modern truth, and when the Lambeth Encyclical and Report appeared England was thankful to note that the Anglican Bishops acknowledged that the traditional opposition to birth control "is not founded on any direction given in the New Testament," and that they "cannot condemn the use of scientific methods . . . which are thoughtfully and conscientiously adopted." The Bishops' pronouncements were allotted several columns in nearly every newspaper for several days. The relevant parts of the Lambeth Report can be found verbatim in the September number of the *Birth-Control News*, 1930. The most significant pronouncements were as follows:

"It must be recognised that there is in the Catholic Church a very strong tradition that the use of preventive methods is in all cases unlawful for a Christian. We acknowledge the weight of that testimony, but we are unable to accept that tradition as necessarily final. It must be admitted that it is not founded on any directions given in the New Testament. It has not behind it the authority

of any Œcumenical Council of the Church. Moreover, it is significant that the Communion which most strongly condemns in principle all preventive methods, nevertheless in practice recognises that there are occasions when a rigid insistence on the principle is impossible."

. . . "It can never be right for intercourse to take place, which might lead to conception, where a birth would involve grave danger to the health, even to the life, of the mother, or would inflict upon the child to be born a life of suffering; or where the mother would be prematurely exhausted, and additional children would render her incapable of carrying out her duties to the existing family."

"In our judgment the question which they should put to themselves is this: Would conception be for any reason wrong? If it would clearly be wrong, and if there is good moral reason why the way of abstinence should not be followed, we cannot condemn the use of scientific methods to prevent conception, which are thoughtfully and conscientiously adopted."

The Lambeth Encyclical and Report materially weakened the position of Rome in its endeavour to maintain that Chris-

tianity as a whole was fundamentally opposed to birth control. The Roman Catholic Cardinal Bourne took various opportunities to present his views, and to ventilate his annoyance at the step taken by the Anglican Bishops, and, indeed, even commented on them most offensively in no measured terms. For instance, speaking in Edinburgh, Cardinal Bourne is reported by the *Daily Mail* of June 18, 1931, as follows:

“CARDINAL BOURNE’S ATTACK ON  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

“UNFAIR AND UNFRIENDLY

“No sympathy on moral questions. Divorce and birth control. Unfounded charges against Catholics.

“Accusations of unfairness and unfriendliness; of the levelling of unfounded charges; and a want of sympathy on moral questions, were made by Cardinal Bourne against the Church of England.”

Roman Catholics in general felt the weakening of their position, and did not hesitate to give expression to their resentment. Some

spoke of the "moral Morass that Lambeth creates."

Cardinal Bourne used the strongest language in denouncing the Established Bishops of the country in which he dwelt. *The Universe*, in October 1930, in large headlines announced: "Cardinal Archbishop condemns Resolution adopted by the Anglican Bishops at Lambeth. Traditional Christian morality abandoned." "Resolution a real scandal to the Christian mind." Then they continued: "It is recognised that the Prelates who adopted this Resolution have abdicated any claim which they may have been thought to possess to be authorised exponents of Christian morality." These words were spoken by the Cardinal Archbishop in his visit to Swansea, and *The Universe* continued: "His Eminence described the resolution as an abandonment of an unbroken traditional Christian teaching."

The *Catholic Herald*, at the same time, under the heading: "Real Scandal to the Christian Mind. Cardinal on the Lambeth Resolution. The Anglican Surrender on Birth Prevention. Unnatural Sin," continued: "The Protestant Bishops' recent surrender on birth prevention scandalised the whole Chris-

tian world. That the practice which is condemned by Divine law, by moral principle, and by ecclesiastical law, should be countenanced by the State Church came as a surprise." As the words which Cardinal Bourne used are significant in this discussion, it will be as well to give verbatim *The Times* (6th Oct. 1930) report of what he said, which is as follows:

"BISHOPS AND BIRTH CONTROL

"CARDINAL BOURNE'S PROTEST

"Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, preaching at Swansea yesterday, protested against the resolution of the Lambeth Conference on birth control: He said:

"There is another matter to which I must refer. I do so very reluctantly on account of its unpleasant nature, but I should fail in my duty were I to allow it to pass unnoticed, this being the first opportunity I have had of alluding to it. Some weeks ago there took place at Lambeth a large Conference of prelates of the Anglican Communion. Many resolutions were passed by them, and among these resolutions there was one, voted by a large majority, which condones in certain

circumstances practices euphemistically described as birth-control—which Christian tradition has consistently condemned as unnatural sin. I was abroad when this really destructive resolution was made public; and I know the intense surprise and real scandal to the Christian mind which have been caused at home and abroad by this abandonment of unbroken traditional Christian teaching. It is recognized that the prelates who adopted this resolution have abdicated any claim which they may have been thought to possess to be authorised exponents of Christian morality.”

“In order to justify their action they make appeal, by reference and not by quotation, to what they understand to be the teaching of the Catholic Church. It is difficult to grasp what they really mean, for the reference is vague and veiled. I can only suppose that some, who are not trained theologians, must have misread and misinterpreted some Catholic writers on moral theology, just as one not trained in law easily misunderstands a legal treatise. But the reference, as it stands and in the sense which it appears to bear, is quite inaccurate—I do not wish to use any stronger term—and wholly misleading. Lest,



therefore, any be led astray by this resolution of the Lambeth Conference and placed thereby in danger of committing grievous sin, I now reaffirm the teaching of the Catholic Church on this very subject, binding on the conscience of every man and of every woman."

"Any direct interference with the natural consequence of the marital relation—namely, conception, whether within the marriage state or outside it—is an unnatural vice, sinning against the nature which the Creator has bestowed upon us, and therefore grievously displeasing in His sight."

On Saturday, 11th October, the *Tablet*, of which Cardinal Bourne himself is one of the proprietors, said: "Cardinal Bourne, usually so restrained in his language, declared at Swansea that the Anglican Bishops 'Have abdicated any claim which they may have been thought to possess to be authorised exponents of Christian morality.' . . . It will be remembered that the Lambeth Reporters, who somehow could not mention Catholics without that sort of malice which is born of envy, tried to fortify their evil teaching on Birth Prevention by what our

Cardinal justly calls 'A vague and veiled reference' to our own teaching. They more than hinted that by some kind of crooked ingenuity we virtually permit what we pretend to denounce. For many weeks Catholics have been requesting Anglicans to clarify these obscure and mischievous suggestions, but in vain."

The Cardinal's views were accepted generally as a simple, clear-cut statement of "the law of God" by the non-Catholic press.

Knowing from uncomfortable personal experience something of the law of libel, and therefore realising (what some of the public fail to appreciate) that the Bishops as a *group* were unable to seek redress for this direct libel upon them, I wrote to the *Saturday Review* the following letter, wherein I challenged the Cardinal. Needless to say, I got no direct reply, although my old antagonist, Dr. Halliday Sutherland, entered the correspondence columns with a brief "reply" to me.

To the *Saturday Review*, 18th October 1930.

"CARDINAL BOURNE AND BIRTH CONTROL

"SIR,—Your paragraphist says that the Cardinal 'stated the position of Rome with

clarity and precision' when he takes the line that Romish opposition is based 'simply on the absolute law of God,' and that this 'defines the difference between Rome and Canterbury.' I fear he takes Cardinal Bourne's statements in the way the Cardinal intended, and not in the way the true facts would necessitate.

"The facts about Rome include the following: That birth control has never been officially denounced by any Pope; in the eighteen-forties a Cardinal advised the then Pope to leave the subject alone as the practice was already so prevalent; that various methods of birth control are not only established in the Roman community but even condoned and approved by leading Roman theologians.

"Our Bishops quite correctly pointed out at Lambeth that there is nothing in the teaching of Christ or in the New Testament to justify the current tradition against the control of conception.—I am, etc.

"MARIE C. STOPES."

Letters on the subject from a number of correspondents were published for several weeks in the *Saturday Review*.

Unfortunately the Editor of the *Saturday Review*, though a brave man, was not quite brave enough to print all the details I put in my following letters, and so when Father Henry Davis, S.J., and I debated in the columns of the *Saturday Review*, the edge of my weapon was somewhat ground down. The *Tablet* then, on 15th November 1930, reprinted the whole of Father Davis's letter, wherein he, after resenting my statement that the "safe" period was a method of birth control, accused me of "equivocation," saying: "Intercourse during the 'safe' period simply is not 'birth control,' nor anything approaching it."

At the conclusion of their reprint of the *Saturday Review* letter the following words were added in italics by the *Tablet*:

*"The Bishops of the Lambeth Conference, preferring innuendo to precise statement, meanly associated themselves with a false charge against the Catholic Church; so this matter will often crop up. Catholics, therefore, should keep Father Davis's letter handy for reference and citation."*

The charge against me personally of equivocation, printed with such prominence, and in association with a still further insult to the defenceless Bishops of the Established

Church of my country, was just too much to overlook.

So I issued a writ in the High Court against Cardinal Bourne and his fellow-proprietors of the *Tablet*, who were the Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham, Father Francis Henry, and J. E. Wild, as well as the author of the letter originally appearing in the *Saturday Review*, Father Henry Davis, S.J., I was sorry to drag the latter into the Courts, because in personal correspondence with me formerly he had been pleasant and courteous; but to appear in Court with a libel action which had not included the author of the libel would have been somewhat irregular, so he too had to receive a writ. The service of the writ on Cardinal Bourne aroused a hurricane of astonishment and resentment in his own circles.

The case was protracted by extensions of time asked for by the legal advisers to the Cardinal. Then the preliminaries followed the usual course, but after some time negotiations were entered into, and prolonged discussion achieved the sole object for which the writ was issued, namely, the withdrawal of the aspersion which I considered had been

made against my integrity. On an undertaking on the part of the proprietors of the *Tablet* to publish a disclaimer in their journal, the case was settled out of Court. It was *not* "dropped" as was erroneously stated in some papers.

The *Tablet* (January 2, 1932), published the following:

"FATHER DAVIS, S.J., ON BIRTH CONTROL

"Under the above heading, the issue of the *Tablet* dated November 15, 1930, reprinted with some comments of our own, a letter which Father Henry Davis, S.J., had contributed to the *Saturday Review* of November 8. It appears that some readers have interpreted passages in the letter as implying that Father Davis accused Dr. Marie Stopes of intentionally seeking to misconstrue the views of her opponents. While we strongly disapprove this lady's teaching on Birth Control, it is always our wish to do her justice; and therefore we gladly give prominence to Father Davis's assurance that he had no intention of accusing Dr. Marie Stopes of deliberate misrepresentation."

In a sense I felt that this was also an in-

direct apology to the Bishops of our Anglican Church. At any rate, it is noticeable that the worst type of language which was being used against them ceased after the service of my writ on the Cardinal, although efforts to influence clerical opinion in this country persist.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PAPAL ENCYCLICAL

THE story of the Papal Encyclical has its roots in centuries past; its wording is subtle but medieval. From a Roman Catholic point of view it was long overdue, for in argument with me for years "Papal pronouncements against birth control" were incessantly waved in my face, or used as a cloak and covering for a debater stripped of his rational arguments. Yet after a few years of investigation I exposed the fact that there was no such Papal pronouncement!

Let us go back a dozen years to the time when it was generally thought there was infallible Papal authority for the denunciation of birth control.

When I first published *Married Love* (and thus lit a candle it will be hard even for a dominant Church ever to put out) I had an instinctive feeling, though no explicit



knowledge, that it would be well to have the Church of Rome on my side. So in 1917 I went to the then most prominent and enlightened priest of whom I could hear, asking him to read the manuscript and to give me a letter or a foreword to publish with the book. This Father St. John, S.J., did, and praised it as "admirable throughout, and it seems to me that your theme could not have been treated in more beautiful or more delicate language. . . . It should bring happiness to many married couples whose lives are drifting apart through want of knowledge . . ." Then he pointed out that as a Roman Catholic he viewed one of the points dealt with in *Married Love* from a different angle from mine.

In *Married Love* I had devoted only a couple of pages to the control of conception, thinking it a *sine qua non* in all intelligent married life, but on this short paragraph hinged the divergence of Father St. John, and he said: "Let me take in illustration of my meaning the case you give of a worn-out mother of twelve. The Catholic belief is that the loss of health on her part for a few years of life and the diminished vitality on the part of her later children would be a very small

price indeed to pay for an endless happiness on the part of all. In our belief, then, the destruction of one spermatozoon is not the question, but the deliberate prevention of an eternally happy existence which, in the supposition, might arise from its preservation. Holding, as we do, that the marriage act is the divinely ordained means by which man offers to God the opportunity of creating an immortal being, we do not believe that he may make use of this means and deliberately frustrate it of its end without doing grave wrong."

I was astonished. Doing in Rome as Rome does, I faced the same problem as did Father St. John in the light of my own focus on Eternity, and answered him: "To me to-day is essentially a part of my Life Everlasting. I cannot separate time and eternity, this world and the next, as religious people often seem able to do; to me this body is a tool in the service of (though not completely in the control of) my immortal soul. Now it seems to me that religious people—and even in your letter I fancy I detect the same tendency (forgive me if I am wrong)—are too ready to separate this world and the next, to act unreasonably or cruelly here and to trust to

Eternity, or the Hereafter, to put all right. I do not think that is the way God wills us to work out His plans now that He is giving us the knowledge to do better.

“Could there be anything more unreasonable or cruel than to bring into life half a dozen children *doomed from birth* to ill-health, poverty, and almost inevitable crime?

“Christ forgave the thief upon the Cross, but He said, ‘Woe unto him through whom offences come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he cast into the sea.’ Would Christ approve of deliberately creating a thief by bringing forth a child who was one inevitably through predictable weakness of physique and mentality and an environment of poverty? (‘Thief’ stands for criminals in general.)

“But more, what about others, born dead, born imbecile, thwarted of life by miscarriage, which tear and rend the over-burdened mother so that she is forced to neglect the children she has, and her neglect turns them into thieves? The poor, uneducated mother commits this crime through ignorance: it is *we who know* and allow her to remain in

ignorance who are really responsible. Is not our withholding God-given knowledge the greatest stumbling-block of offence to these little ones, and shall we not deserve the millstone round our necks? Were every one to have all the children physiologically possible (now that infant mortality is so much reduced by science), in a few centuries there would not be standing-room on the earth, and nowhere for a blade of grass or an ear of corn to grow between the crowding feet. Is then a Roman Catholic mother, the increases to whose large family get punier and punier, to be privileged to go deliberately with that host of puny children *at the expense of others*, not only through that part of Eternity called Time, but through all Eternity?"

I was puzzled and stirred by the insistence on the part of Roman Catholic leaders of thought that the Church should condone such cruelty towards mothers and children and such selfishness towards others as was indicated in the instance chosen by Father St. John. My scientific attitude of mind, accustomed to delve deep into rocks far back into millions of decades of the earth's history to seek the *origins* of life's manifold forms,

was challenged to investigate the source of such an unnatural orientation to human life. I searched as thoroughly as I could, but neither in print nor the verbal answers of authorities was I able to find any record throughout the centuries that any Pope of the "unchanging Church" had ever officially condemned the control of conception.

On many controversial platforms, before crowded audiences all over the country, I then began to make the explicit assertion that there was no such Papal pronouncement. A few years ago I was frequently challenged and contradicted by Roman Catholics who showed themselves poorly acquainted with the tenets of their own Church. Then came my public debate with a Roman Catholic member of the House of Lords, the ex-Prime Minister of Newfoundland, Lord Morris, K.C.V.O.; and this free to-and-fro debate in front of a crowded audience very soon hinged itself on the bedrock statement reiterated by Lord Morris that there *was* a Papal pronouncement against the control of conception. I challenged, but challenged him in vain, to give explicit references, though his insistence on the "fact" was unshakable and emphatic. I would not let the matter rest.

After endless searching I got into an interesting correspondence with the leading theological expert of the day, Father Henry Davis, S.J., and he told me explicitly that I was correct, and that no Papal pronouncement against contraception did exist.

My desire to establish this clearly, so that even the most rabid Roman Catholic *must* recognise the fact that there was no Papal pronouncement, was twofold; not only the natural feeling common to every scientific mind that no trouble is too great to verify one's references and to be strictly accurate, but also I had the evangelist's hope of winning to a new way of thinking those who seemed to me nearly ripe for the truth.

I thought, in my simplicity—the most ardent followers of the Christ, who was so full of gentleness, pity, and sympathy towards children, are surely those who should welcome most eagerly the alleviation of the old heart-breaking agonies imposed upon women and children through diseased and undesired maternity. I thought that if I could show that there was no infallible Papal pronouncement against the control of conception then it should be only a matter of

time for the Church of Rome to approve this application of science to benefit humanity, as they now approve the use of chloroform for sufferers of great pain during an operation, though they opposed it at first.

After 1928, when Father Henry Davis, S.J., told me I was right, and that there was no infallible Papal pronouncement against birth control, the references to the Papal pronouncement died down in argument, and the kaleidoscopic colour of the campaign changed again. About this time (from exactly what source I do not know, but I think it was initiated by the Anti-Birth Control Society originally run by Roman Catholic efforts), a new phase of the movement arose through the influx of users of the words "birth *prevention*" instead of "birth control" or the "control of conception."

This recalls the early stages of my work, when unscrupulous or muddle-headed opponents were very fond of speaking or writing against specified evils and injuries caused by *abortion*, and then suddenly switching over from an argument they had established for abortion on to the control of conception by slipping in the words "birth control" in place of "abortion," and confusing the issue

in the minds of hoodwinked and ignorant listeners. Time and again on public platforms I had met and exposed that piece of chicanery until as a debating point it had become played out. But a good deal of similar chicanery became possible in a more elaborate and subtler form by the users of the words "Birth Prevention," which so conveniently cover both legitimate birth control and illegitimate abortion.

It is true that the term "birth control" has never been very satisfactory, nor should I ever as a scientist have used it myself but for the fact that it is the one and only phrase which has really appealed to the poor women whom, as a philanthropist, one wishes to help. They understand it. The phrase "control of conception" is too long and scientific, and frightens them. So the name "birth control" has been forced upon the modern social movement for the control of conception by the poor and uninstructed who are its beneficiaries. It is, therefore, in my opinion essential to define very exactly and explicitly what is meant by the control of conception, popularly called birth control, and this is done on page 25.

That sudden switch over to the words



"Birth Prevention" was a new line of attack, and was rather more cleverly engineered than the old clumsy confusion and juggling between the two words "abortion" and "birth control." "Birth prevention" as a phrase is meant to cover both abortion and birth control so that the two processes, physiologically and legally totally distinct and separate, can yet be further confused as it may suit the debater or the politician. When the various physiological harms, evils, and criminalities of abortion had been thoroughly rubbed into an audience and their horror and repugnance aroused, the speaker's peroration can neatly be diverted to birth control, and the resultant feeling of revulsion on the part of the audience turned against the control of conception while it was still hot-headed and gasping with righteous indignation against the facts supplied by abortion.

The *right* course for the potential mother to pursue is to *prevent* the first conception of a child which is undesirable rather than to destroy the embryo after its inception. This is as true physically as morally. Being insistently and acutely made aware by the poor women who suffer so much injury and ill-health, as well as so much pecuniary loss at

the hands of the abortionist, I felt that in relation to criminal abortion there was one common plank of agreement between the Papacy and myself. Hence it seemed to me that it would be a step forward if, instead of endeavouring to confuse the public mind as was then being done, the position were clarified, and it could be mutually agreed that these were colossal evils involved in the present modes of "birth prevention" by means of *abortion*.<sup>1</sup> I thought that if one could only get a clear statement of the recognition of this fact from the Pope it would be of inestimable value in countering what I thought and still think is a rapidly growing menace, not only to individual women (a small proportion of whom die annually as a result of injury inflicted by the unscrupulous professional abortionist), but to the much larger number who live with health injured and even bear future children who are weakened and deteriorated as the result of attempted but unsuccessful abortion. So that in April

<sup>1</sup> The colossal extent of the dirty, dangerous, and criminal trade in abortion is not at all realised at present; some facts about it may be found in my book, *Mother England*, and in the prosecution of Carpenter see the *Birth-Control News* for March 1930.

1930 I wrote directly to the Pope at the Vatican, as follows:—

“To His Eminence the Pope of Rome, The Vatican.

“Approaching your Eminence in the hope of obtaining your co-operation and your blessing, I ask encouragement for the work to which I am devoting my time and resources, that of the endeavour to combat the terrible evils both to the bodies and spirits of humanity which are now widespread over the world in the form of ‘birth prevention’ by harmful and murderous methods of abortion.

“The colossal extent of this evil appears not to be realised by most persons in authority. It urgently calls for a united effort from all goodwill and high ideals to put an end to such a racially and spiritually destructive practice. At present many women are not only injured for life by the physiological harm done to them by the dirty, ignorant methods employed, but also many of the later-born children are thereby deteriorated, if not actually defective, as the result of this grievous maternal practice.

“The unfortunate ignorance and repres-

sion of knowledge which is rife in most so-called 'civilised' countries intensifies the evil, causing vast numbers of people to confuse this practice of abortion with the physiological restriction and spacing of conception in the interests of the best health of the mother and children, and falsely to call it birth control, a misnomer and confusion which have terrible consequences.

"These consequences are so serious, not only on the physical and moral, but also on the spiritual plane, that I earnestly pray for your co-operation in world enlightenment. I have confidence that Your Eminence concurs that when a woman knows that she is diseased or suffers from a disability which inevitably dooms her to produce diseased children that she should guard herself from motherhood and she should not allow herself to get into such a condition that she resorts to the evil practice of murderous abortion.

"An expression of Your Eminence's concurrence is eagerly awaited.

"Believe me, with yourself, one wholly devoted to the service of humanity,

"MARIE CARMICHAEL STOPES.

"Heatherbank, Hindhead, England,

"14th April 1930."

But either the Pope did not understand its significance and the value that it would have been to have answered this honestly and directly, or he thought himself and his world-wide organisation stronger than the forces of scientific truth for which I stand, and his answer was the reactionary Papal Encyclical of December 1930.

The publication in Rome of the Encyclical in Latin naturally stirred a very great interest in the press of this and all countries in the world. On 9th January the majority of the leading English papers gave the Pope's Encyclical the great publicity which stamped it on the memory of the Public mainly as a "total condemnation of birth control" (see p. 9). I was rung up by newspaper editors and press associations, and asked immediately to give my opinion upon this Papal condemnation of all birth control. But I was aware that if the Pope had really totally condemned all birth control he would be in direct conflict with the leading Roman Catholic theological publications. I did not credit the assertion, made so emphatically by the press, and replied that I would not give any opinion until I had seen the full and unabridged text in the original Latin. This

took some procuring, and though I had three sources of information—even the earliest to supply me with the Latin text took about a fortnight to obtain it from Rome. By that time any pronouncement of mine (or of any one) on the Encyclical was completely dead, as press news. Hence the mistake, disseminated so widely by the press of the world, went in that press unanswered and uncorrected.

All the while, even in this Encyclical, the Pope of Rome *does not* totally condemn all birth control, but explicitly permits one well-known method, the use of the so-called “safe period.” Readers may well be incredulous, after all the denunciations against birth control, just a few of which were quoted at the beginning of this book, to find that even in this Papal Encyclical itself a well-known birth-control method is permitted. It requires explicit substantiation, for it is easy for a reader to miss it. Therefore, I give verbatim the words of the Encyclical dealing with the point: “Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a

deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious. Small wonder, therefore, if Holy Writ bears witness that the divine Majesty regards with greatest detestation this horrible crime, and at times has punished it with death. As St. Augustine notes: 'Intercourse, even with one's legitimate wife, is unlawful and wicked where the conception of the offspring is prevented. Onan, the son of Juda, did this, and the Lord killed him for it.'

"Since, therefore, openly departing from the uninterrupted Christian tradition some recently have judged it possible solemnly to declare another doctrine regarding this question, the Catholic Church, to whom God has entrusted the defence of the integrity and purity of morals, standing erect in the midst of the moral ruin which surrounds her, in order that she may preserve the chastity of the nuptial union from being defiled by this foul stain, raises her voice in token of her divine ambassadorship and through Our mouth proclaims anew: any use whatsoever of matrimony exercised in such a way that the act is deliberately frustrated in its natural power to generate life is an offence against the law of God and

of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of a grave sin. . . . Holy Church knows well that not infrequently one of the parties is sinned against rather than sinning when for a grave cause he or she reluctantly allows the perversion of the right order. In such a case there is no sin, provided that, mindful of the law of charity, he or she does not neglect to seek to dissuade and to deter the partner from sin. Nor are those considered as acting against nature who in the married state use their right in the proper manner although on account of natural reasons either of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth. For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider so long as they are subordinated to the primary end and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved."

A reader not practised in the subtleties of Roman Catholic theological diction may read these paragraphs and not perceive wherein any birth-control method is per-



mitted, and this is exactly the effect desired, and certainly achieved, on the journalists of the world. The critical words are: ". . . Nor are those considered as acting against nature, who, in the married state, use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons, *either of time* . . . new life cannot be brought forth."

But did this aspect of the Encyclical receive what is commonly called "a good press"? It did not receive any press at all! As I drew public attention to this aspect of the Encyclical at a crowded meeting of the Society for Constructive Control and Racial Progress, held in the Essex Hall, London, on 25th February 1931, it got about by word of mouth, though it was not reported in the Press.

The use of sex-union in the "proper manner, but at such a time that conception cannot be expected" is the essence of the birth-control method popularly described as the "safe period." (See p. 32 *ante*.)

So that, in spite of all the hullabaloo in the press and all the pulpit denunciation, even the Papal Encyclical itself recognises the validity of an old and well-established method of birth control which Roman

Catholics are permitted to practise in company with the rest of the world.

A letter of mine on this point appeared in the *Saturday Review*, and soon after one of the Roman Catholic papers, in the column: "Answers to Correspondents," revealed that some Roman Catholic reader had evidently been perturbed by me, and had written asking the Editor: What about the situation created?

This was the only open notice taken, so far as I could find, by Catholics of my point about the Encyclical. The inquiry to *The Universe*, of 6th February 1931, was dealt with in the Enquiry Bureau, No. 1794: "We have not yet seen the Latin text of the Pope's Encyclical, and so it is possible that 'at times' is an incorrect rendering of the Latin. There is only one reference in Scripture to the subject, and that is the case of Onan, mentioned in Genesis xxxviii. 9, but that one case is perfectly definite and quite sufficient. For a discussion of this and cognate matters see Fr. Davis, *Birth Control: The Fallacies of Dr. M. Stopes* (Burns, Oates, & Washbourne ; 1s. 6d.)."

The English rendering was, of course, not incorrect, but read as follows in the official Latin publication:

“Neque contra naturae ordinem agere ii dicendi sunt coniuges, qui iure suo recta et naturali ratione utuntur, etsi ob naturales sive temporis sive quorundam defectuum causas nova inde vita oriri non possit.”

Throughout the popular paragraphs and reports incessantly appearing, we find persistently a confusion between birth prevention and birth control which has proved so good a weapon for those handling a mass of superficially minded people whom they want to influence. The Church clearly condemns that “birth prevention” which is caused by abortion, but under this name they are often talking about the control of conception. This is a point of subtle confusion whereby the thoughtful mind can disentangle what is said and the ignorant, hastily superficial mass of people can be led to believe that the instruction given them is whatever for a political purpose it is desired at the moment they should think they are being given. It is, in the religion of Rome, as in the religion of the Orient, a useful thing to have a sharp distinction between the teachings of the dogmatists so subtly trained in the use of language that whilst speaking apparently openly to the

world at large, they convey their meaning simultaneously in opposite directions to the two types of mind. This is a feat not easy of achievement, but supremely well performed by the Pope in his Encyclical on Marriage.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ROMAN CATHOLIC TACTICS

THE long interval between the publication of the Memorandum of the Ministry of Health, and its first circulation in typewriting to its own officials in 1930, facilitated its establishment before the storm of invective was let loose upon it. It was already 4th April 1931 before the *Catholic Herald* came out with a column headed:

#### “GOVERNMENT SURRENDER TO BIRTH CONTROLLERS

“The Government has succumbed to the clamour of the Stopery clique and has issued a memorandum to maternity and child-welfare authorities throughout the country, intimating that publicly paid medical men may give advice to women patients ‘on contraceptive methods.’ . . .

**This decision of the Labour Ministry is going to prove a very serious matter for the Labour Party at the polls. No well-instructed Catholic is likely to vote for any candidate who will support the application of State money to such a purpose as this."**

As the general public began to realise that the Roman Catholic Church does permit birth-control methods herself, though they be neither the best nor the most reliable, the position of Rome in the conflict between the new morality and the old had become an increasingly untenable one, and her tactics extraordinary. Her difficulty, of course, is greatly intensified by the fact that she has at least two types of followers whom she must satisfy simultaneously: the educated pleasure-loving upper classes, whose birth-rate is very small and differs little from that of corresponding members of other denominations, and the very poor and ignorant masses forming the majority of Rome's flock, who are completely dominated by priestly dicta, and whose birth-rate is extremely high. Their numerous small moneys contribute materially to the strength of the

“ABBOT’S PLAIN SPEAKING ON  
RACE SUICIDE

“CATHOLICS ‘UP IN ARMS’ AGAINST  
TOWN COUNCIL

“IMMORAL DECISION

*“Protest against giving Birth Prevention  
Information.*

“Plain speaking by priests and people on the evils of birth prevention followed the decision of the Ashington Urban Council, Northumberland, to authorise its Medical Officer of Health to give information and advice on birth-prevention methods.

“GIVE A DECENT WAGE

“A petition of protest, it is stated, will probably be drawn up and forwarded to the Ashington Urban Council as a result of its action, which has caused indignation among the Catholics of the town. . . .

“The Abbot added that he was absolutely against giving any instruction on these matters at all. First of all, it was immoral, and he was against it except by ordinary moral restraint. They could not interfere with the laws of nature.

“An Ashington priest, protesting that birth prevention was akin to murder, stated that no decent man or woman used these methods without experiencing repugnancy, shame, and remorse.

“ ‘The practice is not only contrary to the Christian religion, but is also a menace to the prosperity and well-being of the nation. I hope the Council will reconsider their decision.’ ”

In a district which may be thought to be simple, the crudest methods are pursued in the effort to keep the people ignorant. A good illustration of this can be seen at Bootle, where in 1930 the local Town Council passed a Resolution in favour of making birth-control information available to the very poor through a municipal clinic. This led to a fever of activity on the part of the local Roman Catholics, and the *Catholic Herald*, 25th January 1930, came out with the following:

“BOOTLE CATHOLICS WANT ‘NO  
STOPERY’

“‘RESENTMENT AT DISGRACE CAUSED BY  
COUNCIL

“‘PROCREATION, GOD’S GIFT



"We Catholics resent the disgrace which those Councillors have brought upon themselves and upon us who placed many of them in the positions which they occupy.

"Theirs was a most unhappy and grossly immoral decision."

The *Catholic Times*, 24th January 1930, perpetrated the following:

"THE TEACHING OF CONTRACEPTION

"BOOTLE COUNCIL DECISION BITTERLY  
RESENTED

"DEATH RATHER THAN  
KNOWLEDGE

"Councillors, who were looked upon as the guardians of morals, had voted for birth-control information being given through the public services to the poor. Catholics were poor. He knew the Catholic women of Bootle, and he knew that he was perfectly safe in saying that, rather than receive that information, they would prefer death itself."

A mass meeting of Roman Catholics was summoned in Bootle, and presided over by

the Roman Catholic Archbishop. The local paper, the *Bootle Times*, 24th January 1930, reported as follows:

**“PUBLIC APOLOGY DEMANDED  
FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS**

**“MGR. O'BRIEN THREATENS BOYCOTT**

**“BIRTH-CONTROL DECISION RESENTED BY  
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

*“Protest sent to Mayor*

“A Public Apology was demanded from those members of the Bootle Town Council who voted in favour of the proposal to give knowledge of birth control through public clinics, by Mgr. O'Brien, at a mass meeting of Catholics in the Metropole Theatre.

“‘Never as long as we live (he said) shall we give a vote to those 23 councillors who were in favour of this decision until they publicly apologise for the public insult they did not hesitate to give.’

“Archbishop Downey presided over the meeting.”

The same issue of the *Bootle Times* contained a spirited column by Councillor

Haworth headed *No APOLOGY!* in which he challenged Mons. O'Brien.

The *Bootle Times* had a very fair leader on the subject, and published columns of correspondence on both sides.

The *Bootle Times* published conspicuously a letter from me, wherein I expressed my astonishment at the mixture of misrepresentation and intolerance contributed by the Roman Catholics to the *Bootle Times* on this subject. I continued:

"That Roman Catholics in a Protestant country should designate the resolution passed, not only by the Bootle Council but by many other councils and public meetings all over the country, as a 'public insult' is a queer choice of language. Let Roman Catholics not interfere with Protestant liberty. Jews also live in this country: their religion forbids them to eat bacon; but we should simply laugh were the Jews to try to stop by law the sale and use of our breakfast bacon!" I briefly mentioned that the reverend cleric was wrong in his facts as Birth Control was established in the Church of Rome, continuing:

"As the resolution in favour of birth control passed by the Bootle Council did not

specify which means should be used for instruction to inquiring mothers, would it not have been more Christian and more intelligent to assume that Roman Catholic women would be instructed in Roman Catholic approved methods, and Protestant women in scientific methods?" And I concluded by pointing out that up to that date there had been no Papal pronouncement against birth control.

No more was heard of the demand that the local Councillors should apologise.

It was evidently found to be rather bad tactics to go quite so far as they went in Bootle, but in a good many other places where local Councils considered taking up the powers they were entitled to do under the memorandum of the Ministry of Health, Roman Catholics interfered. The West Hartlepool Town Council decided to permit information on the subject of birth control to be given at the local Maternity Centre, and members of the Association of Catholic Laymen put on record their view that "We regard this misguided Resolution as a disgrace to the Borough."

At Merthyr the Health Committee received a strong Roman Catholic protest against the

establishment of a birth-control clinic. A resolution was passed by the congregation of the Roman Catholic Church describing the teaching of "artificial birth prevention" as "contrary to Christian morals, destructive of the sanctity and happiness of family life, detrimental to public interests, and hurtful to the conscience of a Christian people." Other Roman Catholic organisations recorded similar protests.

Unfortunately the Town Council, which had already passed a favourable resolution, caved in to the Roman Catholics and the resolution was rescinded. The *Catholic Herald* for 10th October 1931 published the following:

## "CATHOLIC ACTION EFFECTIVE

### "RESOLUTION RESCINDED AT WEST HARTLEPOOL

#### "BIRTH PREVENTION ADVICE RULED OUT

"Timely intervention by the Catholics of the town has brought about the desired end, and West Hartlepool residents will not have imposed upon them birth prevention information, which it was proposed should be given at the clinics.

"The Town Council recently passed a resolution authorising the imparting of advice on birth prevention in certain cases at maternity clinics. Our representative, realising the seriousness of the move, called a meeting of prominent Catholics, including the five Catholic Councillors. He also had a special interview with the local clergy and Bishop Thorman.

"As a result, a certain line of action was agreed on with the approval of the Church authorities. The Knights of St. Columba and other organisations co-operated in making a protest, and so effectively was the situation handled that the Town Council at their meeting on Thursday decided to rescind their resolution."

In Wales the fight is very bitter:

"The danger approaches our very gates," says the official organ of the Welsh Roman Catholic Church, issued under the patronage of the Archbishop, Dr. Francis Mostyn.

"At Merthyr Tydfil it has shown its head within the Council Chamber, where a concrete proposal for the establishment of a birth-control clinic has been put forward and has met with little opposition.

"The Catholics of the district, we are proud to say, have replied in no uncertain fashion by uniting in public protest, and in a legitimate attempt to ensure that the vote of the member who represents them will be cast against the innovation.

### "TOOTH AND NAIL.

"We must fight tooth and nail to prevent the enshrinement among our social services of this thing, to be a perpetual blot on the fair name of our country and a constant source of temptation to the faithful.

"If protests be unavailing, might we not be justified in carrying our opposition farther and, by refusing to pay our rates, show that we are in deadly earnest."

Many other Councils have been hindered by local reactionary Catholics.

Among the most recent and possibly the most misguided of these campaigns by Roman Catholics is that now proceeding against the work of the local Health Committee at Ealing. An immense amount of space in the local press, and even in the central press of London, has been devoted

to what is described by the *Middlesex County Times*, of 14th January 1933, as

“CATHOLIC WAR ON THE TOWN COUNCIL.”

Ealing is rather too near Central London for reliance to be placed on such ignorant mis-statements as readily bear fruit in out-of-the-way districts. It is remarkable that among the Roman Catholic spokesmen imported into Ealing to address their protest meeting was Dr. O'Donovan, M.P., who is reported to have made the statement: “Your Council officials are to go into the market and sell goods that up till now have been sold only by shamefaced boys in dirty back streets.” (*Middlesex County Times*, 14th Jan. 1933.)

Absurdities like this may do for Ireland and the backwoods, but are hardly likely to influence educated people who are acquainted with the facts.

#### CONCEALMENT.

The concealment of facts which in any way reflect on the Roman Catholic Church is generally resorted to wherever it is possible. For instance, prison statistics were making it evident, in spite of the high professions of morality and claims of superiority made by



Roman Catholics, that nevertheless they were producing a very markedly larger proportion of the criminals in prison in this country than their relative number in proportion to the community as a whole warranted. This was seen for the last time clearly in this country in a White Paper published by the Home Office in 1906.

Thereafter pressure was brought to bear in an indirect manner, and since that date no further figures of the religions of prisoners have appeared in this country although they have been asked for. The excuse some years ago, when I inquired for them, was the necessity for economy, and the great expense alleged to be involved in collecting the necessary figures. After receiving this answer I made direct personal inquiries from a Prison Governor, who assured me that he naturally possessed a record of the religions of all prisoners in his institution, as, of course, would all the Governors of the prisons throughout this country. As the publication of the 1906 statistics only required a couple of sheets of foolscap size paper and the expense involved in asking the Governors for their existing records would be merely nominal, the excuse of 'ex-

pense' is hardly convincing. It is unfortunate that in this country the publication of these figures has been guillotined, so that we must turn elsewhere to get some recent evidence of the sort from corresponding statistics.

In New Zealand the figures are available, and appear in the Report on the Justice Statistics of the Dominion of New Zealand for the year 1930 as follows:

## PRISONERS—RELIGIONS

			M.	F.
Church of England	.	.	1,141	62
Roman Catholic	.	.	826	62
Presbyterian	.	.	425	23
Methodist	.	.	67	3
Others	.	.	245	10
Totals	.	.	<u>2,704</u>	<u>160</u>

Of the total population of 1,344,469, 553,993 were returned as members of the Church of England, and 173,364 as Roman Catholics; that is to say there were more than three times the number of members of the Church of England than there were Roman Catholics; the Church of England prisoners numbered 1,203 and therefore the number of Catholic prisoners should have been about 376, but as a matter of fact they number 888! There are, therefore, more than twice

as many Roman Catholic prisoners in proportion to the total number of their religion than there should have been had their criminality been no greater than that of the Church of England. But it is, of course, well known, that unless a prisoner has a very definite religion he is classed as Church of England, so that actually the number of prisoners entered as Church of England is higher than it should be, and the total criminality of Roman Catholics in proportion to their total number is more than double that of any other sect recorded.

“By their fruits ye shall know them.”

It is high time that some fearless investigator demanded in Parliament the publication of these figures once more. It is not right that sectarian influence should be allowed to suppress legitimate statistical data.

It is a strange irony that the same sect which produces the highest proportion of prisoners should insist on breeding at the public expense, regardless either of quality of offspring or the health or marital decency of conduct of the parents.

#### THE CARAVAN CLINIC.

The mania which Catholics have for

interfering with the behaviour of Protestants in their own country reached a culminating point in the Birth Control Movement when, tiring of argument, they began to use arson instead. An unmarried Roman Catholic woman, misled by the lies put into circulation by those better qualified than she to judge, tried to set fire to the travelling clinic of the Birth Control Society founded by myself. She was caught by the police while in the process of attempting her damage. A second time she succeeded in burning the caravan right out, doing damage which amounted to over £200 worth of destruction when reckoned in simple cash, but far more, of course, in terms of waste of time and energy as the result of such crime. She was sentenced at Leeds Assizes to two months' imprisonment. One of the curious aftermaths of her behaviour was that Dr. Halliday Sutherland brought a libel action against me and the publishers and printers of the *Birth-Control News*, because of the leading article which contained the following paragraph: "The chief current event, however, is the resort to the good old mediæval practice of burning instead of enlightening the enemy. The poor dupe who

acted as cat's-paw for the gang, the unmarried woman Ellis, has to take her punishment alone. There is little doubt, however, that she is not the only one who should have stood in the dock for the crime of burning the travelling clinic of the C.B.C."

Dr. Sutherland was, of course, neither actually concerned nor referred to. He lost his case in the Law Courts, but I lost again a great deal of time and strength and money as the result of Roman Catholic interference in this Protestant country

#### UBIQUITOUS.

And how ubiquitous they are. In spite of the fact that the B.B.C. has never allowed me to speak on the wireless, the Reverend Father Day, a Jesuit, was allowed to broadcast on *Married Love*, the title of my book! It reminds me of the behaviour of the London County Council Theatrical Committee at the time, some years ago, when it included a couple of Roman Catholic members, sufficient, of course, to sway the Committee, so that it forbade me to have my name, or the name of my book, on a film play which was produced by an English firm of film producers; and while they totally banned

*Married Love*, a few weeks later they allowed the title by another of a play called *Unmarried Love*!

—Twice I went down myself to interview the L.C.C. Theatres Committee, and found them very charming but for the definite and consciously hostile Roman Catholic element. Had I had enough money, I should have brought a legal action against them for illegitimate interference with my business interests, but it would have been very difficult and expensive, and as already money was being drained away from me by litigation, I could not risk it. The most I secured was a letter graciously saying that they would not raise any objection, in connection with my film, "Maisie's Marriage," to the use in posters of my name, provided that the words "author of *Married Love* were relatively *small*!!

The whole story of the Roman Catholic tactics directed to the suppression of my one film play, although the play had almost no bearing on the birth-control controversy, would fill something like a volume. The power of intrigue which it revealed was so remarkable that it should have its place in this consideration of Roman Catholic tactics.

In 1923 an all-English firm of film producers (which in those days was rather more exceptional than it is to-day) asked me to write a play. They produced it in a very beautiful manner, with an all-English cast. Captain Walter Summers collaborated with me over the scenario, and all agreed that we were writing not a propaganda play, but a simple melodramatic story. The moral, if it had one, was that it is better for a girl from the slums to live as a nursemaid in the house of charming people from whom she married a young man of her heart (a fireman in a Fire Brigade), rather than to lead the life of a butterfly in night clubs. By 1923 I had become a little wary of my Roman Catholic opponents, knowing that they would not be content to leave any of my work alone, so I advised the producers to send the play to get its certificate from the Censor without any name, or with a *nom-de-plume* for the author, and told them why. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, the Chief Censor, was a Roman Catholic. But, like most straightforward English people, the producers could not believe that theological dogma could embitter the simple friendly relations existing between themselves and the Trade

Censor, more especially as there was nothing to censor in the play. It was not a propaganda play, but a simple story, and they were confident that there was nothing whatever in it which could offend Roman Catholic or any susceptibilities, or justify any hindrance in obtaining a certificate for universal exhibition. In spite of my warning, the trade show was arranged on the assumption of the certificate being immediately granted. The reception given to the film was one of the wildest enthusiasm; but the certificate necessary for general display did not arrive. Instead of it being granted in a few hours, or a day or two, as was the custom, the film was held up for four interminable weeks, in the course of which a great part of the business profits had disappeared by the delay. The despairing producer, time after time, went to see the Censor in his office, and finally the producer and I went personally to Mr. T. P. O'Connor's own flat to try to get the matter put through rationally. In that interview we three were present alone, and at the end of it Mr. O'Connor appeared to yield to our request, but nevertheless threatened that our victory would be an empty one. And it was indeed,



for what he did was well-nigh unbelievable; it was, at any rate, absolutely unpredictable by any rational Protestant Englishman.

After granting us our certificate Mr. T. P. O'Connor went straight to the Home Office, and there, in some mysterious way—perhaps by himself capturing the necessary notepaper—he managed to get a circular letter on Home Office paper, looking as though it were official, sent out to every Chief Constable in England stirring up trouble for the film when it should arrive in the various Provincial towns!

I happened to have one or two friends amongst the Chief Constables, and they sent me information about the letter. I happened also to be in Portsmouth the very week when my film should have been showing had it not been blocked by the Chief Constable as a result of the receipt of this letter purporting to be from the Home Office. I saw both the Chief Constable and the Town Clerk. They deeply regretted the mistake, and promised that if the film came up again for display they would take no exception to it. But what use was that? The reputation of the film as a money-maker was hopelessly and irretrievably damaged. *My* reputation

as a successful money-making film writer was irretrievably destroyed, and I thus financially weakened. All over the country managers who had booked it had been getting into trouble, so not only that film, but all future potential films which I might have written, and made much money thereby, were killed more completely than if the certificate had been withheld. Naturally I have never been asked again to write a film, because the film world is far too scared of such interference, and the money loss involved runs into far too great sums for producers to risk a repetition of such injury as Mr. T. P. O'Connor then did to my film, "Maisie's Marriage." Yet where the public were allowed to see it, they were immensely, indeed almost hysterically, appreciative. I remember the big crowds the first day in Manchester when the great theatre was filled three times over to overflowing, and people were turned away from the doors in hundreds, and the wild enthusiasm of those audiences. But Mr. O'Connor had killed it commercially, and only here and there were there sporadic exhibitions of what should have been its universal success.

When I found out what had happened it was, of course, too late, but I went straight down to see the Home Secretary myself. It then transpired that no one in the Home Office officially knew of the transmission of these letters. In short, through Mr. O'Connor's extraordinary circle of influence, and his unscrupulous use of it for his Church's ends, he had put what purported to be the official mechanism of the Home Office into movement against my utterly inoffensive film. The matter seemed so outrageous that I placed the facts before a fighting Member of the House of Lords.

In the printed Order for the day of the House of Lords for November 13, 1923, under the heading: "Bills Appointed and Notices for Wednesday, November 13, the following appeared: "The Earl Russell: To call attention to a communication from the Home Office of June 30 last addressed to the Chief Constables and Watch Committees, and marked 'Confidential,' attempting to interfere with the production of a film entitled 'Maisie's Marriage,' by Dr. Marie Stopes, and to ask His Majesty's Government what official status, if any, the Board of Film Censors has; whether the Censorship is, in

fact, administered by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, and whether it is the practice of the Home Office to act as Mr. T. P. O'Connor's representative in endeavouring to interfere with the production of particular films without any independent inquiry on their part?"

But, alas, although a full-dress debate was arranged, it was a few hours too late. The Baldwin Ministry resigned, and did not have to face the inquiry. Alas, that debate never took place! How much the public would find well-nigh incredible would have come to light.

## CHAPTER IX

### ROMAN CATHOLIC MEDICALS

THE Roman Catholic medical practitioner bulwarks the Church of Rome. Linked up with the world-wide Roman Catholic organisations, the medicals can do more than any other group of lay Roman Catholics to hinder progress and work in the interests of the Church.

The majority of people do not stop to inquire whether a particular medical practitioner, or his assistant, is a Roman Catholic or not. So trustful and simple-minded is the average British man and woman that, even if told that Doctor So-and-so is a Roman Catholic, they do not hesitate to employ him in their households, and to take his pronouncements on *medical* subjects as authoritative. Consequently Roman Catholics have been well advised to encourage, as they have done, the entry of their promising

young men into the medical profession. I have not the exact figures by me, but I understand that the number of Roman Catholic medical practitioners in Glasgow to-day is more than ten times greater than it was a generation ago. Here and there, in all sorts of unexpected but influential places, the Roman Catholic medical suddenly appears.

Take, for instance, the very influential, indeed the key position of Secretary to the Royal Society of Medicine in London. Until the death of Sir John M'Alister, who was almost as its founder, who nurtured and reared this distinguished Society to its present eminence, the secretaryship of the Royal Society of Medicine was in the hands of a broad-minded Scotsman of sterling character. On his death the man appointed in his place was a Roman Catholic. The consequent change in orientation of that institution may not be perceived by the casual visitor, but I have experienced and know the changed atmosphere.

Certain special Roman Catholic medical organisations, and in particular the Medical Guild of St. Luke and SS. Cosmas and Damian, have devoted a good deal of con-

sideration and discussion to the subject of the best means of "exposing and preventing the pernicious doctrine of birth control." They resolved to discuss and draw up a practical scheme to be *submitted to the Archbishop*, thus showing that their actions were to be guided by theological politics and not medical science. An explicit example of such a mediæval position was reported in the *Catholic Times* for 14th November 1930 as follows:

"That no Catholic doctor could obey such immoral Government instructions was the reply given by the Rev. Father Agius, S.J., M.D., at the meeting of St. Luke's Medical Guild, Glasgow, on Sunday last, to a question as to the position of a Catholic doctor under a State medical service if the Government issued an edict that he was to teach his patients the latest methods of birth prevention. Another question was as to the position of the Catholic surgeon ordered to sterilise a poor unfortunate unfit."

"It was evident from the writings of Leo XIII, on individual rights *versus* the rights of the State, added Father Agius, that the Catholic Church would not favour a State medical service, for it would deprive

the citizen of his alienable right to choose his own medical attendant."

In matters impinging on maternity it must never be forgotten that the Roman Catholic medical is not dealing simply with *medical* facts, as he would do in a case of pneumonia or scarlet-fever, but that he is subject to a religious hierarchy, and is not a free and unbiased agent.

Nor is the Roman Catholic willing to permit his fellow-medicals, who may be Protestants, Jews, or Atheists, to handle that subject without his interference. The following incident from my own experience is so highly significant and illustrative that it should be noted here. In 1929 I was asked by a certain branch of the British Medical Association in the North to lecture to their members on contraceptive technique, as I had done at other branches. I may add here that I have repeatedly lectured at medical schools to audiences composed of medical practitioners and medical students only, and at some meetings of the British Medical Association. In every such case the audiences have been confined to the medical profession, and yet have very greatly exceeded in numbers their usual



attendance, showing the great interest taken by individual members of the profession in this subject. The meetings have always been followed by an open discussion which continued until the time forced its closure. On this occasion, in 1929, I had been officially invited, and had accepted, the British Medical Association's invitation, when a front-page article appeared in a paper called the *Standard*, an organ of *Irish* Catholic opinion. It is so significant that it is worth reproducing in full. It ran as follows :

“MEDICAL MEN AND DR. STOPES:

“PECULIAR CHOICE OF  
LECTURER

“DUTY OF B.M.A.

“CATHOLIC PRACTITIONERS' GRAVE  
PROBLEM

“(From a *Special Correspondent*)

“Some time ago the British Medical Association was criticised in *The Standard* for certain of its activities. Now there is a danger that it may again challenge attention by condoning a practice which runs

counter to Catholic teaching and Christian principles of morality.

“It is reported that a branch of the Association has arranged with Dr. Marie Stopes to lecture to its members on this subject. Are the expenses of the lecturer to be paid out of the funds of the Association? If so, Catholic medical practitioners will feel obliged to withhold their subscriptions, and the question of forming a Catholic medical association will become one of immediate import.

“Now, Dr. Marie Stopes is not a qualified medical practitioner, the subject which she has made her speciality is not a medical subject. The General Medical Council has before this removed men from the register for associating in a professional way with the unqualified. What attitude, therefore, can they logically adopt towards a branch which is arranging to have its members taught by Dr. Stopes?

“To Irish Catholic teaching institutions the matter is one of some importance. Some of these institutions encourage their graduates to join the British Medical Association, and none discourage them from joining. But if the Association permits a branch to lend

its weight and approval to unnatural practices, Catholic members will have to reconsider their position.

“The Association has never yet betrayed the interests of practitioners, nor lowered the standard of medical morality. It can maintain its position as a guardian of the profession’s highest ideals by discouraging branches from endorsing, directly or indirectly, teachings which are repugnant to many of its members.”

I received distressed apologies from the officials who had organised the projected meeting, but they were not brave enough to put up a fight against this interference with their self-determination, and the meeting was cancelled. Such steps were taken inside the Association that I have never since been invited to address any other meeting of the British Medical Association. Not only are the Roman Catholic men and women, who form a small minority of the medical profession in this country, thus able to gag their fellow-practitioners, but they do so in such a way that no voiced protest from any medical man or woman has appeared in their official organ, the *British Medical*

*Journal*. Fortunately the medical schools in this country are not under the thumb of the British Medical Association, and since 1929 on several occasions I have been invited to lecture to medical schools. These lectures are to be distinguished from propaganda lectures, and give purely professional information on the technique of the subject.

One sees that it is not only the poor and ignorant women of Bootle, but even the educated Roman Catholic medical man, who shouts "death rather than knowledge!" For some years past now even my medical text-book *Contraception: Its Theory, History, and Practices*, which has been endorsed and highly praised by the leading medical journals and many of the leading medical men in this country, has had no reference at all in the pages of the *British Medical Journal*, and my publisher is not allowed any space for an ordinary paid advertisement, nor even to include the book by title only in the list of his publications appearing in the advertisement pages of the *British Medical Journal*.

The *Catholic Herald* substantiates my exposure of the Roman Catholic efforts to shackle the freedom of the whole medical

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profession. The *Catholic Herald* came out as follows:

## “CATHOLIC DOCTORS’ PROTEST PREVAILS

“MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DROP MARIE STOPES

“EVEN ADVERTISEMENTS REFUSED

“Protest made by Catholic doctors against Marie Stopes’ lectures have been successful in that she is no longer invited by the profession to give those addresses. Marie Stopes and one of her books are again the subject of ban or contention in two continents. Owing to the action of the British medical profession she is no longer asked to lecture to branch meetings of the British Medical Association. Advertisements for her text-book for the use of doctors are no longer accepted by the ‘British Medical Journal’!”

The *Tablet*, in reporting the meeting of the British Medical Association in Eastbourne in 1931 (*Tablet*, 8th August), “suggested that the development of the closest co-operation between priests and doctors would be achieved by Catholic parents guiding their sons equally to both professions. External

chiding would not produce half the effect that real brotherly affection could do towards cementing the union that naturally existed between the two professions. Before Catholic doctors could make any great impression upon public life they must exercise to the full their influence in their own profession. Obvious matters that called for remedy by proper and adequate representations were advertisements of lay contraceptive literature and appliances in the great Medical Journals."

Years ago, when early in my work a Roman Catholic medical man, Dr. Halliday Sutherland, attacked me in his book in such a manner that I had to take the matter to the Law Courts in what became the lengthy trial, *Stopes v. Sutherland*, ultimately going right up to the House of Lords, he had the advantage of a powerful and far-reaching organisation behind him, and he had working on his behalf the Westminster Catholic Federation, which has "played a useful part" in many directions on behalf of Roman Catholic activities. According to the *Catholic Times* of 26th June 1931: "Another useful work was the help given to the appeal which raised about £7,000 to enable Dr. Sutherland to fight the Birth Control Appeal in the House

154 ROMAN CATHOLIC METHODS OF BIRTH CONTROL of Lords." While in the end I had to bear much heavier costs than that with no such organisation behind me nor aid from any one. Conducive to the strength of the Roman Catholic Church is the support it gives its own members, so that a Roman Catholic anywhere in the world knows that he has behind him an international organisation which can be roused to subsidise and defend him, while those trying to fight for right outside this entrenched body have to do so single-handed.

Since, in spite of all their efforts, great strides forward are being made within the British medical profession, the Roman Catholic is beginning to demand coercive legal interference even with freedom of speech on this subject which the Ministry of Health officially recognised by the permissive Memorandum in 1930. This Memorandum is so staid and cautious that it is hard to believe it can be the cause of the explosive hostility quoted on p. 131. It seems wise to present it *verbatim*, so that my readers shall have before them the very words which rouse such Roman rage. It is given on p. 155.

The Roman Catholics get even more aggressive. So recently as the 8th October

1932 the *Catholic Herald* reported the annual meeting of the Glasgow and West Scotland branch of the Catholic Medical Guild, when they discussed what practical steps the Bill should take to combat the open and flagrant propagation of birth-control methods.

The Roman Catholic medical man is desirous of gagging not only his profession but the public, as we see in an undated pamphlet of the League of National Life (published, I think, about 1928) wherein Dr. Halliday Sutherland says: "The time has come for the Government to follow the example of that of France [*sic*] and to suppress the advocacy of birth prevention."

"THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH'S MEMORANDUM  
"BIRTH CONTROL

"(1) The Minister of Health is authorised to state that the Government have had under consideration the question of the use of institutions which are controlled by Local Authorities for the purpose of giving advice to women on contraceptive methods.

"(2) So far as Maternity and Child Welfare Centres (including Ante-Natal Centres) are concerned, these Centres can properly



deal only with expectant mothers, nursing mothers, and young children, and it is the view of the Government that it is not the function of the Centres to give advice in regard to birth control, and that their use for such a purpose would be likely to damage the proper work of the Centres. At the same time the Government consider that, in cases where there are *medical grounds* for giving advice on contraceptive methods to married women in attendance at the Centres, it may be given, but that such advice should be limited to *cases where further pregnancy would be detrimental to health*, and should be given at a separate session and under conditions such as will not disturb the normal and primary work of the Centre. The Minister will accordingly be unable to sanction any proposal for the use of these Centres for giving birth control advice in other cases.

“(3) The Government are advised that Local Authorities have no general power to establish birth control clinics as such, but that under the Notifications of Births (Extension) Act, 1915, which enables Local Authorities to exercise the powers of the Public Health Acts for the purpose of

the care of expectant mothers and nursing mothers, it may properly be held that birth-control clinics can be provided for these limited classes of women. Having regard to the acute division of public opinion on the subject of birth control, the Government have decided that no Departmental sanction which may be necessary to the establishment of such clinics for expectant and nursing mothers shall be given except on condition that contraceptive advice will be given only in *cases where further pregnancy would be detrimental to health.*

“(4) Under the Public Health Acts, Local Authorities have power to provide clinics at which medical advice and treatment would be available for women suffering from gynæcological conditions. But the enactments governing the provision of such clinics limit their availability to sick persons, and the Government have decided that any Departmental sanction which may be necessary to the establishment of such clinics shall be given only on the following conditions: (1) That the clinics will be available only for women who are in need of medical advice and treatment for gynæcological conditions; and (2) that advice on contraceptive methods

will be given only to married women who attend the clinics for such medical advice or treatment, *and in whose cases pregnancy would be detrimental to health.*

“MINISTRY OF HEALTH,  
*July 1930.*”

## CHAPTER X

### INTERNATIONAL INTERFERENCE

THEIR interference with the independent actions of Protestants in their own country does not exhaust the activities of our British Roman Catholics.

The conscious corporate organisation of Roman Catholic medical men is linked up with their general attempt at international interference. We detect them at work in the following letter, sent by Roman Catholic medicals to the League of Nations at Geneva, when it became known that some sensible clauses had been inserted by experts in a Maternal Welfare Report. It will be noticed that one of the signatories is the same Dr. O'Donovan, M.P., who sprang into the fray at Ealing. (See also p. 131.)

It appeared in the *Catholic Medical Guardian* for April 1932:

“GUILD OF SS. LUKE, COSMAS, AND  
DAMIAN

“The following letter of protest in French was addressed urgently by the Master and Secretary of the Guild to the League of Nations at Geneva, so as to be in time for the Sectional Meeting concerned on the 11th April:

“ 138, HARLEY STREET, LONDRES,  
D'ANGLETERRE,  
6 AVRIL 1932.

“Monsieur le Directeur,—

“La Société Médicale anglaise de St. Luc, représentant les médecins catholiques d'Angleterre, a l'honneur de signaler à votre bienveillante attention un passage du ‘Rapport du Comité rapporteur pour la protection de la mère,’ No. C.H. 1060, où il est enjoint aux médecins tant privés qu'officiels, de donner l'instruction anticonceptionnelle dans certaines affections qui rendent la grossesse nuisible pour la santé maternelle.

“Sous la rubrique ‘Avortement et mesures anticonceptionnelles,’ à la page 26, ligne 38, on y trouve en effet ce qui suit: ‘Mais il

ne suffit pas de dire à une femme mariée, atteinte de tuberculose, d'affection cardiaque ou de néphrite, qu'il ne faut plus qu'elle ait d'enfants; il est indispensable, en outre, d'expliquer exactement les mesures que son mari et elle doivent prendre pour éviter une nouvelle grossesse; si le médecin privé ne tient pass [*sic*] à donner ces conseils, c'est le centre sanitaire qui est l'organisation la plus qualifiée pour se charger de ce soin."

"Or, le choix des moyens à employer pour prévenir une nouvelle grossesse est essentiellement une question d'ordre moral; elle relève uniquement de la conscience individuelle des intéressés, et n'appartient à aucun titre, au domaine de la médecine préventive où de la thérapeutique. Le souci de la santé maternelle ne légitime donc pas, de la part, du médecin, une ingérence dans un domaine qui n'est pas proprement médical; d'autre part, le respect de la liberté de conscience lui interdit de suggérer des solutions contraires à la morale naturelle et attentatoires aux préceptes de la religion chrétienne. Enfin, le simple prudence scientifique doit l'empêcher de préconiser des pratiques qui présentent des inconvénients graves pour la santé féminine, et dont

la diffusion croissante constitue, de l'avis des eugénistes, un facteur précis de détérioration de la race.

"C'est pourquoi les médecins catholiques représentés par notre Société protestent énergiquement contre l'insertion de ce passage dans le rapport No. C.H. 1060, et vous prie de bien vouloir communiquer cette protestation aux membres du Comité de protection de l'enfance.

"Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Directeur, l'expression de nos sentiments distingués.

"Le Secrétaire général:	"Le Président:
W. J. O'DONOVAN,	ERNEST E. WARE,
M.D., M.P.	M.D.Lond.,
	F.R.C.S.Eng.

"À S.E.M. Ekstrand,

"Directeur de la Section des questions sociales et de L'opium Secrétariat de la Société des Nations, Genève."

What was the wording that offended the Roman Catholic Church in the expert's report? That we learn from Mr. A. J. Cummings, the special correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, who conveyed to the public the welcome information that the medical experts of the Special Committee of the League

Committee recognised that women suffering from certain diseases should not be allowed to become pregnant again.

In the *News Chronicle*, 5th October 1932:

“BIRTH CONTROL

“*From A. J. Cummings, Geneva*

“At a private meeting of one of the League Committees to-day, dealing with the work of the health organisation, the Irish delegate vigorously objected to the following passage in a report by the Committee on Maternal Welfare:—

“‘Apart from the practice of contraception for personal or economic reasons, it may be necessary to avoid pregnancy on account of the mother’s own health, and in such cases it is preferable to prevent pregnancy occurring at all rather than to interrupt it. But it is not sufficient merely to tell a woman suffering from tuberculosis or heart disease or neuritis that she should not again become pregnant. It is necessary to explain exactly what steps she and her husband should take to prevent this from happening. If the private doctor is not prepared to do this, the information can be given most appropriately at the health centre.’



"The report with the offending passage had already been published, though it had yet to be distributed and passed by the Assembly.

"I understand that the Irish Free State delegation intervened on religious grounds, after pressure had been exercised by the Vatican and by a large body of Irish-Americans.

"The Maternal Welfare Committee is composed of medical experts who refused, in spite of the Irish demand, to withdraw their considered expert conclusions. All they have consented to do is to amplify the conclusions by pointing out that they desire to give no offence to any Government or religious body, but are concerned only with the maternal aspect of the question, which is merely that women physically unfit to bear children should not be called upon to sacrifice their lives.

"The distribution of the document has been suspended for this purpose.

"Reference to the beginning of this story will be found in the *Birth-Control News* for June 1932, pp. 23 and 29, and July 1932, p. 52.

Soon after this the Roman Catholics were boasting that the League of Nations at Geneva had withdrawn their expert's report

at the instigation of the *Irish Free State*. Cardinal Bourne's paper the *Tablet* exulted in the success of what is therein described as the general Catholic "drive." On 12th November 1932 the *Tablet* wrote as follows:

"On the last day of this year's April, the *Tablet* published "Some Words for Geneva," condemning the report (C.H. 1060) of a sub-committee of the International Organisation for Hygiene. This document was a plea for Birth Prevention in certain circumstances; and it went so far as to recommend the fitting up of motor-lorries, carrying models and anatomical pictures, from which Birth Prevention might be expounded in villages. We are happy to announce that C.H. 1060 has been withdrawn, under the pressure of remonstrances, mainly Catholic, and that the League of Nations Assembly has invited its Health Committee 'to consider the Report afresh.' Let us hasten to add that our article and notes and private letters on this unpleasant proposal have been merely part of a general Catholic drive in several countries. For example, England's Catholic Guild of St. Luke, St. Cosmas, and St. Damian worked hard in the matter, while a closely

argued and fully documented rejoinder to C.H. 1060 was prepared by the Catholic Artsen-Vereeniging of Holland. Nor did other Catholic papers in different lands neglect their duty. All of us pulled together and defeated a movement repugnant to Catholic principles.”

The news that Ireland, one of Rome’s strongholds, was the country thus to weld more firmly injurious shackles on all womanhood is highly significant. It should come as a blow to those high-minded idealists who think that the world would be better ruled by the League of Nations than by national governments, to see how easily the considered opinions of *experts* were defeated at the instigation of a small country dominated by Roman Catholic priests.

When in the spring of 1932 Canon Dearmer warned England, at a luncheon given by the Society for Constructive Birth Control, that Roman Catholics could and would not hesitate to interfere in political issues, we were reproached for scaremongering. A few months pass, and we are presented with an explicit instance where they not only did interfere but acknowledged and

boasted of what they accomplished through an international agency aspiring to take the position of overlord of the free countries of the world. The Roman Catholics know full well that they could never have accomplished this result openly and directly in England herself.

In this country they do not refrain from attempting quite direct interference with parliamentary as well as municipal affairs.

The *Daily Mirror* of 6th May 1931 reported that "All Roman Catholic electors in the St. Rollox, Glasgow, by-election have been advised by the Archbishop of Glasgow to vote for the Unionist candidate, Mr. Kennedy."

"This, it is stated, is because the Socialist nominee, Bailie Leonard, has not given a satisfactory answer to a question regarding the giving of birth control information by medical officers. Every parish priest has received a letter to this effect."

That their Church must come before their country with Roman Catholics is an allegation often made against them and often denied. Yet on 20th October 1929 those who put their country first were attacked by a

168 ROMAN CATHOLIC METHODS OF BIRTH CONTROL  
priest, as reported in the *Daily Mirror* for  
21st October 1929.

**"PRIEST'S ATTACK ON ENGLISH CATHOLICS  
WHO 'PUT THEIR COUNTRY FIRST'**

"An amazing attack on English Roman Catholics and converts to the Church of Rome was made by Father John Buggy, senior curate of St. Bernard's Church of the Sacred Heart, Halifax, in a sermon at Walbuga's Roman Catholic Church, Shipley, on 20th October.

"Describing converts as 'only fair-weather Catholics who had come over for obvious reasons,' he said:

"'I believe that the English Catholic puts his country before his Church, whereas in Ireland the faith has never had to take second place. The abominable Reformation was due to country coming first.'"

Where birth control knowledge is suppressed, what happens? Look at France. In the minds of popular imagination, she is the leading birth-control nation. Even the majority of educated people are not aware yet that a law was passed in France in 1920 which made all dissemination of knowledge

of birth control and even discussion and propaganda about it criminal offences; a law which broke up Societies existing to pursue the subject. The openly-avowed object of this piece of interfering legislation was to increase the birth-rate, but the general result was not an increase in the birth-rate, it was an increase in the *abortion*-rate. Where people, for economic or other reasons, cannot rear large families, legislation interfering with the discussion of sound, scientific means of the control of conception can only lead either to infanticide or abortion, as it has done in France.

How far a country can go in its desire to impose itself upon the world at large was seen in Italy when Mussolini not only boasted that "the Italian people are too prolific—I am glad of it, I will never countenance Birth Control propaganda—but births exceeded deaths by 400,000 yearly in this small peninsula with 40,000,000 inhabitants. These figures show what vast problems we are facing as the country grows, and only three roads are open to it; voluntary sterilisation—Italians are too intelligent to do that; to make war, or to seek an outlet for the over-population."

But we cannot expose all this international interference in the ordinary press. Much vital information escapes capture in print: and when news displeasing to Roman Catholics does appear, their organisations make so much trouble for somebody that those in responsible positions are generally too busy to allow another similar occurrence.

Heywood Brown, writing in 1928 in the *Nation* of New York, said: "Precarious is the position of the New York newspaper man who ventures any criticism of the Catholic Church. There is not a single New York editor who does not live in mortal terror of the power of this group. It is not a case of numbers but of organisation. Of course, if anybody dared, nothing in the world would ever happen. If the Church can bluff its way into a preferred position, the fault lies not with the Catholics but with the editors."

## CHAPTER XI

### IRELAND THE TAIL-WAGGER

FOR some years specific efforts had been made in various ways to destroy freedom of thought and expression in the non-Catholic British press on this vital subject of birth control so obnoxious to Roman Catholics.

International action appeared likely to succeed in coercing by indirect means where direct and open discussion would certainly have led to the failure of the reactionary schemes. The public knew little of this, and probably few are aware that in 1923, at the International Conference for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications, the British nation *alone* stood out against the whole world on the side of true decency and freedom of speech. The verbatim report of this Conference was published as C. 734. M.299. 1923. IV. by the League of Nations.



Herein, on p. 52, it is reported how it was urged on the delegates that it should be made a punishable offence:

“(1) To commit any of the offences alluded to in the first article with regard to books, obscene writings, printed matter, posters, drawings, prints, paintings, emblems, pictures, photographs, or cinematograph films containing incitement to abortion or *anti-conception propaganda*; performances, descriptions, divulgations, or offers of demonstrating methods, remedies, substances, instruments, or any objects whatever with intent to *prevent conception*.

“(2) Deliberately to procure remedies, substances, instruments or objects intended to secure abortion or to facilitate, with a view to *anti-conception propaganda*, the use of remedies, substances, or objects for the prevention of conception.”

Thus, not only actual birth-control methods, but even *propaganda* was to be branded as “obscene.” Were this to be passed, the very roots of free discussion of all population problems would be destroyed, as Roman

Catholics desire they should be. Yet this reactionary *Article* was accepted by every one of the delegates representing 34 countries! The British Empire alone stood out, represented by Sir Archibald Bodkin, at that time a Government official, our Crown Prosecutor, who said:

“It certainly is not a desirable thing, if public opinion is sharply divided on any subject, to endeavour to pass legislation which will prohibit the publication of works dealing with such a subject as this” (p. 54).

Thus foiled, Roman Catholics set to work and devised an even more ingenious way of achieving the result they desire, and suppressing discussions of this subject about which they particularly dislike the truth to be broadcast. Ireland offered them the weapon they sought. The Irish Free State, although ruling herself, still speaks principally the English language, and English newspapers and books circulate in Ireland.

It occurred to the Roman Catholic hierarchy to get legislation passed in the Irish Free State automatically to stop the circulation in that country of books or papers

containing anything they deemed offensive, and they relied on the consequent coercion of the British press through the circulation managers.

In one of their own journals, circulated among priests, their plans were exposed in detail. The Rev. Father R. S. Devane, S.J., in his article in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* in February 1925, lays the Roman Catholic cards upon the table for his fellow-priests. He says explicitly that Roman Catholic clergy should influence public opinion in Ireland so as to get legislation passed which will coerce the British press. He says: "In a magazine which circulates almost entirely amongst the Clergy one can be more explicit, not only as regards some concealed dangers . . . but also as regards specific means of dealing with this slippery problem, especially by the introduction of legislation" [in the *Irish Dail*]. Father Devane advises the formation of Vigilance Committees, saying: "The most favourable time for setting up such a Committee is on the occasion of the Annual Retreat or Mission, when public opinion can be forcibly brought to bear on the one or two recalcitrant newsvendors who may try to stand out against the ordinary

suation of the individual cleric." He then goes on to say: (p. 188) "Unfortunately the term 'obscene' is equivocal and has different meanings and equivalents" . . . (p. 189) "hence the necessity of accommodating the law to the national standard of morality of our people, and of amending it by the re-definition of 'indecent' or 'obscene'." He says the first remedy necessary is a new legal definition of "indecent" and "obscenity." "Public opinion in all this matter must begin with the clergy, who are the natural moulders of opinion where morality is concerned." (p. 192) . . . "With a *broadened*, well-defined, and comprehensive definition of indecent' or 'obscenity' in Irish law, there would be embraced and included many things that lie outside the English law at present. As a consequence, we could deal satisfactorily with the cross-Channel looseness . . . being propagated with impunity throughout the country, by prosecuting bookstalls, booksellers, and newsvendors engaged in the sale of this unclean and vulgar literature, throwing on them the whole onus of what they sell. This is the only method that will adequately deter those who scoff at episcopal and

clerical advice, and jeer at Vigilance Committees."

He then goes on to say that, among other things, it should be set down that "All books, pamphlets, advertisements, or other written or printed matter *advocating* the artificial limitation of the family or the prevention of conception, shall be deemed 'obscene,' and the publication, procuration for the purposes of sale, or possession with intent to publish or sell, or the transmission through the post of all such publications shall be deemed illegal, etc."

He continues that "It is well known that articles on birth control are frequently appearing in the popular English weeklies and monthlies, some of which have a considerable sale in this country. Letters dealing with the same unsavoury subject are published at times in some of the prominent British dailies."

He then suggests "that one feels reasonably justified in asking the [Irish] Government to seriously consider as to whether the penalty for circulating such literature should not be *imprisonment without the option of a fine*," and that "All books, magazines, etc., advocating Race-Suicide shall be regarded as belonging

to this category . . . and shall be automatically black-listed."

He says also: "Finally, books dealing with Birth-Control . . . are being sold by *several* Dublin bookshops" . . . "Thank God, that even in England this monstrous campaign has quite recently got a staggering set-back. One of the leading Malthusians, Mrs. Stopes" . . . [then he devotes two pages to quotations from the Stopes-Sutherland trials, and quotes the Lords' judgment against me] continuing, "With such weighty opinion before it our Government should have no difficulty whatever in making it illegal to publish or circulate any such literature." . . . "So grave is this matter, that one feels reasonably justified in asking the Government to seriously consider as to whether the penalty for circulating such literature should not be imprisonment without the option of a fine."

He states also that all advertisements of the sort shall be declared indecent, and that any paper which publishes them should be automatically black-listed so that the news-vendors and booksellers selling such newspapers would be amenable to the law. He proposes a neat way out for the English

papers who do not wish to be black-listed in Ireland: "Of course, it would be always optional to such papers to exclude these advertisements."

Discussing the difficulty of procedure, even after they have passed the law, he says: (p. 202) "There is one great difficulty, however, we are still dominated by the old traditions, and by the hitherto prevailing legal standards of public morality. Can these be broken and replaced? This depends on the pressure brought to bear on the Government." . . . "Religious organisations are the easiest and the readiest to work through." The legislation he presses for "should run on these lines:

"(1) A new legal definition of 'indecent' or 'obscenity' which would be in complete harmony with the religious ideals and moral standards of the people.

"(2) The declaring illegal, because 'obscene,' of all literature fostering or propagating the artificial prevention of conception or 'Birth-Control.' "

He states explicitly, "This paper has been written to prepare the way for such a Bill."

Other items follow. I have mentioned

specially birth-control propaganda, for it interests me, but any other subject objected to by Roman Catholics can be similarly treated, as he says: "It is of the very greatest importance that the proposed Bill dealing with Indecent Literature should be as comprehensive as possible."

Here then is the priestly Roman Catholic origin of one of the cleverest and most coercive plots against the freedom of the individual. It succeeded.

A Special Committee was set up by the Irish Government for the consideration of "Evil Literature," and this Committee's Report mentions the bodies giving evidence before it, first on the list being the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland; among others are the Irish Vigilance Association; Father Devane, S.J.; Catholic Writers' Guild; and the Catholic Headmasters' Association. The evidence of the Catholic Truth Society was printed in a confidential pamphlet (Dublin, 1926). They urged that "Neo-Malthusian birth control to be made illegal. All printed matter *advocating* birth control or publishing *birth-control propaganda* or sale of birth-control appliances or drugs to be banned absolutely under severe penalties."



Finally, the Report of the Irish Government Committee (Stationery Office, Dublin, December 1926) contained among its recommendations:

“(4) That the sale and circulation, except to authorised persons, of books, magazines, and pamphlets that *advocate* the unnatural prevention of conception should be made illegal, and be punishable by adequate penalties.”

English editors and managers waxed furious when they were described as yielding to Roman Catholic influence, and indeed a lot of them were but simple Englishmen and did not realise at all how subtly they were being influenced in a hundred ways—by that Vigilance Committee’s private communication to proprietors, for instance, given on p. 184.

To mention the names of newspapers succumbing to the mere threat of such coercion would perhaps be foolish, but the general tendency even of rumours of such legislation was at once perceived by thoughtful readers. Some of our well-established and serious papers stood firm against the loss of Irish circulation, others, however, capitulated before the adumbrated threats.

Here was "the tail wagging the dog" with a vengeance! The result of a brilliant piece of Roman Catholic plotting.

The law was passed, and became an Act of Parliament (No. 21) of the Irish Dail in 1929. The relevant clauses are as follows:

"CENSORSHIP OF PUBLICATION ACT, 1929.

*"Sections 16 and 17.*

"16. (1) It shall not be lawful for any person, otherwise than under and in accordance with a permit in writing granted to him under this section:

"(a) To print, or publish, or cause or procure to be printed or published, or

"(b) To sell, or expose, offer, or keep for sale, or

"(c) To distribute, offer, or keep for distribution, any book or periodical, publication (whether appearing on the register of prohibited publications or not) which advocates, or which might reasonably be supposed to advocate, the unnatural prevention of conception, or the procurement of abortion, or mis-

carriage, or any method, treatment, or appliance to be used for the purpose of such prevention, or such procurement.

“(2) Every person who acts in contravention of this section shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds, or, at the discretion of the court, to imprisonment for any term not exceeding six months or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

“(3) A book or periodical publication containing an advertisement relating to a book or periodical publication which advocates or might reasonably be supposed to advocate within the meaning of sub-section (1) of this section one or more of the matters mentioned in that sub-section shall not, by reason only of its containing such advertisement, be deemed itself to advocate any of such matters, provided such advertisement is inserted for reward and is not and could not reasonably be supposed to be itself an advocacy of any such matter. . . .

“(6) The Minister for Posts and Telegraphs may by order under this section

make regulations for the purpose of preventing the sending or delivery by post (otherwise than under and in accordance with a permit in writing granted under this Act) of any book or periodical publication the distribution of which is prohibited by this section.

“17. (1) The reference contained in section 3 of the Indecent Advertisements Act, 1889, to printed matter which is of an indecent or obscene character shall be deemed to include advertisements which relate or refer or may be reasonably supposed to relate or refer to any disease affecting the generative organs of either sex, or to any complaint or infirmity arising from or relating to sexual intercourse, or to the prevention or removal of irregularities in menstruation, or to drugs, medicines, appliances, treatment, or methods for procuring abortion or miscarriage or preventing conception.”

Let us now return to the few years just before this Irish Act was passed, years during which I knew what was being perpetrated, but few other people in England did. The “British National Vigilance Committee”

sent privately to all *newspaper proprietors* the following bulletin:—

“No. 74.

“IMPORTANT TO NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS

“The Irish Free State Government has appointed a Departmental Committee with the following terms of reference:

“To consider and report whether it is necessary or advisable in the interests of public morality to extend the existing powers of the State to prohibit or restrict the sale and circulation of printed matter.

“The Committee has already issued a notice inviting persons to give evidence.

“The enquiry will, we understand, extend to the distribution of newspapers, magazines, etc., from this country which contain objectionable matter, and attention will be called to advertisements relating to Birth Control, as well as to matters referred to in Bulletins Nos. 44 and 45. One of the promoters of the campaign against ‘bad’ papers strongly asserts that young people in England are being demoralised by the im-

proper distribution of such literature, and the decision may be taken in the Free State that all papers, magazines, etc., relating to or advocating Birth Control should be excluded from the country. There is, of course, a body of people strongly opposed to restriction on the import of newspapers, and censorship of advertisements of the class indicated would greatly help them.

“An important article appeared in the ‘Irish Ecclesiastical Record,’ the representative magazine of the Irish Hierarchy, and the Rev. R. S. Devane, S.J., the writer, may be asked to give evidence before the Committee.

“The article is entitled ‘Indecent Literature, Some Legal Remedies.’ Father Devane discusses the attitude of the Authorities in this country towards indecent advertisements, and urges the Free State Government to do what the English Parliament hesitates to do: to set up a new standard of legal morality which would be in harmony with the wishes of the Irish people.

“Referring to Birth Control literature, Father Devane states that articles and advertisements are frequently appearing in English journals, particularly in what is

styled the 'gutter press,' which are dumped by the ton each week in Ireland. He advocates that all advertisements relating to contraceptives should be declared indecent: that it should be made illegal to advertise drugs or articles designed for this purpose; and that a black-list of papers published out of Ireland containing these advertisements should be prepared by the Government.

"If the views of Father Devane are accepted by the Free State Government, it may seriously interfere with the circulation of British newspapers in that country, and it is suggested that this is an additional and urgent reason why newspapers should eliminate all possible objectionable advertising from their columns."

Of course the effect of this was generally indirect, and as it went to proprietors many editors have not even seen it, and did not realise that it was the source of a certain "atmosphere" it subtly created.

About this time a curious legal action arose which somewhat stirred Fleet Street. The *Morning Post* treated our C.B.C. Society surprisingly. Though it had appeared in the *Morning Post* for *six years* previously, our

advertisement for the Society for Constructive Birth Control, the wording of which was as follows :

BIRTH CONTROL SOCIETY and PIONEER  
CLINIC, founded by Dr. MARIE STOPES,  
108 Whitfield Street, London, W.1;  
Tel. Museum 9528,

was suddenly refused further insertion. Various representations were made without avail.

Consequently, early in 1927, I wrote a personal letter direct to the Duke of Northumberland (as proprietor of the *Morning Post*), because I wanted to draw his attention to the above Bulletin and its significance, and to invoke his aid as a newspaper proprietor in checking the Roman Catholic intrigues which I knew were then active, and which this incident in the *Morning Post* led me to feel were not being entirely unsuccessful even in that staunch Protestant paper. I should, of course, in this chapter like to reprint that letter, but unfortunately I am advised that I ought not to do so. As I am not a Roman Catholic I have to bear the brunt of all legal actions myself,



and cannot afford to invite them, however much in the public interest I think them to be.

Unfortunately, the Duke of Northumberland was going abroad, and he handed this letter to Mr. Gwynne, the Editor of the *Morning Post* who, instead of seeing me and finding out what was behind it, served a writ on me for libel, although he himself was not mentioned in the letter.

The case was tried by Mr. Justice Avory in the King's Bench Division, where it appeared in the List as *Gwynne v. Stopes*.

When I had to defend this legal action in the Law Courts my Counsel pleaded "Privilege," that is to say, claimed that my letter was a privileged private communication to the Duke of Northumberland. This plea of privilege was accepted by Mr. Justice Avory and the case, therefore, should not have required pleading had it not been that the question of "malice" arose in a very intricate legal way, and hinged on what lawyers know as the *Parkinson v. The Aquarium* case. This, put into simple English, meant that I was so prejudiced against the Roman Catholics that I lost my privilege to write private

letters about them to the owners of newspapers! When I was in the witness-box under cross-examination, and fondly hoped the jury was listening to what I was trying to tell them of some of the facts in my possession regarding the Roman Catholic intrigue in Ireland, outlined on pp. 171 *et. seq.*, and as I was about to show the jury copies of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* to substantiate some of the facts, Mr. Justice Avory interposed with the words: "There are some things which are ludicrous although not incredible."

Mr. Justice Avory laughed, and I endeavoured, though somewhat abashed by his derision, to say, "If the Jury have copies of this"—giving the page I wanted them to look at. There was a certain amount of confusion, and the next words recorded in the official shorthand writer's notes are those of Mr. Justice Avory: "They say they do not want it."

And in this summing-up he described what I had been trying to say "as a rigmarole." This trial took place in January 1928. Although Mr. Justice Avory and the jury thought my prognostications "ludicrous," and I lost my case, the *facts* which developed in 1929 were not so very different

from the situation I had tried—and failed—to make them perceive. The Censorship of Publications Act, passed in Ireland in 1929, was clearly rooted in the ideas initiated in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* in 1925, as will be seen by comparing p. 178 with p. 181, *ante*.

Thus the Irish tail wagged the great English dog of the press. I have a whole box of cuttings about the furious local excitement; at that time English newspapers, daring to say something about birth control, were burnt in bulk. For a short time the amount of coercion exercised through Ireland was much greater than it is now, when the subject of birth control has become such a burning topic here that the English press cannot ignore it as the Catholics then tried to force them to do. Nevertheless, under this law in Ireland a large number of magazines which might have contained in the ordinary way articles, or news, or advertisements of literature on the subject of birth control have been intimidated out of printing them.

I myself, for instance, experienced the refusal of a very simple, straightforward book-advertisement in moderate phrase-

ology by one of the biggest groups of London magazine syndicates. I went to see one of the directors about it; he saw me at a *tête-à-tête* interview with not even a secretary present, and acknowledged to me, quite frankly, that he was prevented from accepting this advertisement by the Irish Censorship Act. He personally had no objection to the advertisement, but its inclusion in his pages would stop his magazine circulating in Ireland, and, therefore, he toed the line, obeyed the Irish Censorship Act, and suppressed all reference to birth control in all his journals.

I then said to him: "Would you be willing to give me that statement in writing?" but he absolutely refused to do so. I then laughingly said: "When I have a legal action I will subpoena you to give evidence." He told me quite frankly that, if I did, he would absolutely deny that he had said anything of the sort, and if necessary would deny even the subject of our interview.

I asked him if he would commit perjury at the behest of Ireland, and he said he would have to if I was so foolish as to place him under subpoena in the witness-box.

Such instances strongly impress the one

who has experienced them; but for sceptics, facts which are so established that denial is impossible are needed. For them the instance, therefore, of Ireland, as the country which instigated the reversal of the medical expert's findings at the League of Nations, should be recalled here. I dealt with it on pp. 163-4.

The history of the Irish Censorship Bill illuminates the type of tactics pursued by Roman Catholics, the patient toil, involving the work of many years to bring about the desired end, and the brilliantly thought-out plan necessitating an infinite amount of trouble to deal with me personally. This type of action goes on wherever Roman Catholics have strong feelings, not only about this subject, but about others, and therefore every statesman should make himself acquainted with the tactics pursued by this sect.

After its passing, the working of the Irish Censorship Act became the subject of many newspaper paragraphs. An interesting article in the *Weekend Review* for June 21, 1930, by Mr. St. John Ervine, the dramatist, headed "Behind the Irish Censorship," pointed to a purpose far less legitimate than the mere

ban on books on birth control, the mission to recover Europe for Rome.

Since the flurry in Fleet Street caused by the preparation for the Act, its influence on the English press has weakened; and now that the news value of birth control is so great, papers either have a separate edition of their journal for Ireland or take the risk of being but one among the very large numbers of papers including reports about the movement as part of their reflection of the general interests of the day.

Now let us ask, in spite of her efforts to close Ireland entirely to birth-control propaganda, have the Roman Catholics accomplished even in Ireland herself the avowed object for which they were fighting?

It is true they have banned all birth-control literature: it is true that they have, through Ireland, influenced the world at large; but one must look more deeply into the facts reported about the actual condition in their country before we can measure the real degree of their success.

One finds in Ireland an extremely high percentage of unmarried men, in the Irish Free State marriages are relatively late and relatively few in comparison with other

countries. Although it is true that inside those marriages the number of births is high per marriage, the total number of children born is much less for the whole population than one would expect from such a birth-rate per marriage in a normal population. We find in Ireland also the crime of infanticide as a comparatively new recrudescence of the most ancient form of restricting the population. Two years after the passing of the law making the control of conception criminal in the Irish Free State, the Irish Hierarchy had to deal with infanticide. This result of the No Birth-Control Campaign was reported in the *Irish Independent* of February 16, 1931, under a large heading, "Hierarchy on Need for Catholic Action—the Infanticide Scandal," where we have the extracts from the Bishop's Lenten Pastorals, and read:

#### "MURDER OF INFANTS

"Most Rev. Dr. Fogarty (Killaloe), referring to 'illegitimate intercourse between the sexes,' says: 'This sin is surely bad enough in itself, but when it is followed by wicked mothers or their friends bordering the savagery of King Herod and murdering newly-

born infants to hide their shame or to save trouble, you have a crime of shocking depravity.

“ ‘This is a new introduction among us, and a most horrible outrage against God and humanity. The people everywhere should combine and stamp it sternly out. The administration of the law is entirely too indulgent with this inhuman and disgusting criminality.’ ”

Nevertheless their success with the Irish Censorship Bill has stimulated priestly desire for interference with freedom in Britain itself, and there have been several efforts to draw up Bills on similar or cognate lines. There is at present a strong movement on the part of Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics combined to get a measure through the English Parliament dealing with the advertisement and open sale of scientific contraceptives. This Bill, if introduced, would make a very nice opening for those who are planning to saddle England with restrictions on lines not unlike those now operating in Ireland. Even the Anglican Archbishop of York has been misled about the true situation, and is reported to have



expressed his desire to interfere with the freedom of those selling the medicaments necessary for the control of conception by wholesome scientific means, though it appears to me self-evident that they should be sold openly and decently in all recognised pharmaceutical chemists' shops and advertised delicately and suitably as are other medicaments reputably in the ordinary press.

In Ireland not only is there the Censorship Act to curb literature and discussion, but in 1931 Father Woodlock, S.J., speaking in Dublin to a meeting of professional chemists, addressed them on the subject of the moral responsibility of chemists, treating principally with the campaign for birth control in such a manner that he was cheered enthusiastically by this professional body, and with the backing of this, the largest meeting of chemists ever held in Dublin, drafted a clause for insertion in a new Bill then being promoted to regulate the pharmaceutical profession and to secure the infliction of severe penalties, *including the cancellation of the licences of chemists who engaged in the sale of contraceptives!*

## CHAPTER XII

### ROMAN CATHOLIC DEFECTIVES AND THE STATE

IN 1917, before my work had begun, not so much had been heard about Rome's rules for married people as to-day fills the press, and when their spokesman gave evidence on her teaching before the Birth-Rate Commission in that year it was uncompromising indeed. The attitude adopted by the Church of Rome about *defectives* was clearly put by Monsignor Canon Brown, now Bishop Pella, in the Report of the evidence of the National Birth-Rate Commission under the chairmanship of the Very Rev. Dean Inge, D.D., entitled: *The Declining Birth-Rate: Its Causes and Effect*, published by Chapman & Hall, London, 1917.

This witness presented a précis of the teaching of his Church, in the course of which he stated explicitly that the State cannot

lawfully forbid the marriage of the poor or the physically defective, concluding: "The proposition I lay down is that the State has no right to say that none of the red-haired men shall get married or that men with blue eyes shall not get married."

The chairman then asked, "Or the feeble-minded?" and the answer was, "Or the feeble-minded. I go as far as that."

Dr. Saleeby then says: "I cannot begin to understand where is the ethical warrant for saying it is right to bring, say, imperfect children into the world, and, on the other hand, wrong to use a mechanical bar to the begetting of such children—what standards of right or wrong, whether in Holy Writ or outside it, do you refer to?—*A*. We only take marriage as the Divinely appointed means of procreation. It is a step which is not compulsory. The individual need not accept it; but if he does accept it, he must accept it for what it is; and therefore if he does exercise the rights of marriage, he must exercise them in a way which of itself is not calculated to defeat the end.

*Q*. Of course, conditions which give rise to deaf-mutism or syphilitic infection may be imposed on the individual without any know-

ledge of his own, and that condition may supervene upon married persons. Then it is right for them to beget syphilitic children, but wrong for them to have intercourse by the use of means which we may say to be physically innocuous?—*A.* In one case the disease of the parents being transmitted to the child is an accidental consequence.

*Q.* Of what?—*A.* Of the intercourse. Intercourse in itself is not designed to give syphilis to the baby, but to form a baby.

*Q.* Yes?—*A.* From a particular temporary condition of the parents or their constitutional condition, it may be most likely in human estimation to transmit that disease. We cannot say that they are thereby debarred from using the rights of marriage, although we should counsel them not to.

*Q.* It would be less wrong for them to undertake that extreme probability which in certain definite cases that can be named amounts to certainty—it would be less wrong for them to do that than to use mechanical appliances?—*A.* Yes, certainly.

*Q.* And why?—*A.* I can only get back to the primary principle—what is marriage intended for as revealed religion teaches us?

Dr. NEWSHOLME. That is a sacramental view of marriage?—A. Yes. We should say that of marriage taken as a contract even between Pagans. It has a sacramental character superadded to it when contracted between Christians.

Dr. SALEEBY. Let us take the case of two hereditary deaf-mutes.

THE WITNESS. I should stand to the principle even in that case. Certainly we should do our best to deter them from marrying. At the same time we could not refuse them.

Q. You would not counsel them to marry, but not to propagate?—A. If they marry, they must take the consequences.

Mrs. SCHARLIEB. Or abstain?—A. Yes.

Dr. SALEEBY. Or rather the child must take the consequences."

So crude a view so stringently and harshly put is no longer the fashion in England. Yet in remoter parts of the world, like, for example, Cincinnati, the Roman Catholics have not yet adopted that degree of consideration for their mothers which they are beginning to show in more advanced circles in this country. The *Catholic Herald* in 1930

published the following (13th December 1930):

“‘STOPERY’ CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED  
“POVERTY NO EXCUSE

“FROM HARDSHIPS FREQUENTLY COME GREAT  
BLESSINGS

“DUTY OF EVERY DOCTOR

“CINCINNATI.

“Dr. Joseph Decourcy said that it was the clear duty of every doctor to save and prolong human life, not to destroy or prevent it.

“The doctor was minister to the sick body, and was not called upon to defeat posterity for the purpose of lessening the burdens of poverty-stricken people, no matter how much his heart might bleed at their distress.

“From hardships frequently came great blessings, and many a child born in poor circumstances had risen to become a leader.

“Poverty did not destroy happiness, provided there was enough to eat. By providing the bare necessities of life, charitable organizations were frequently able to tide poor families over periods of stress until they become self-reliant. This was a more construc-

tive action than issuing the dictum 'no more children.' "

There is, however, considerable feeling, even on the part of the Roman Catholics, that the production of the feeble-minded and moral defectives who are becoming an increasing burden on the State, should in some way or another be controlled. An increasing number of incidental remarks by Roman Catholics show that they appreciate the necessity for such control.

There is, on the other hand, a very definite effort on the part of some to take the great advantages afforded to the lower types in this country as a result of measures of relief introduced by responsible members of the community who are urged to philanthropic work by a social conscience. The problem in Scotland became acute some years ago, and the facts and figures available on this subject are most remarkable. The Rev. Duncan Cameron, for instance, ten years ago, when the problem was considerably less acute than it is to-day, gave the following facts in a published article<sup>1</sup>:—

"The judicial statistics for Scotland show

<sup>1</sup> *Birth-Control News*, Sept. 1923.

that the total number of people convicted and sent to prison for crimes and offences of various kinds were: For 1920, 16,978, and of these 5,607 were Irish; for 1921, 16,335, and of these 4,743 were Irish.

“The Prison Commissioners’ Reports show that on December 31, 1920, there were in prison 1895 persons, of whom 467 were Irish, and that on December 31, 1921, there were 2,156 persons in prison, of whom 552 were Irish. Taking the whole population of Scotland, the Irish constitute one-eighth of the total number. But they were responsible for one-third of the crime in 1920, and a good deal more than a fourth of the crime in 1921. It is difficult to draw any conclusion from these figures other than this: that Scotland is being filled by a race less moral and law-abiding than her own sons and daughters for whom she is unable to make provision.

“Thrift and independence have been historic characteristics of the Scottish race. It is interesting and instructive to consider the record of the Irish population in Scotland in these respects. For the period May, 1922 to March, 1923, the total number of children who required to be provided either with



food or with boots and clothing by the Glasgow Education Authority was 20,110, and of this number no less than 12,649 were Irish. The Irish people in Glasgow are one-fourth of the whole population of the city, and yet a great deal more than half the children receiving relief from the Education Authority were Irish. Careful inquiries at the offices of charitable societies result in the monotonous and depressing tale of Irish thriftlessness and lack of self-respect and independence. The secretary of one of the principal relief funds in Glasgow says that 80 per cent. of the applicants for assistance were Irish. In one mining town, well known to myself, the Irish people furnish 70 per cent. of the children requiring assistance from the Education Authority, and yet they are only 20 per cent. of the population. It would be idle to supply further statistics to show these unsatisfactory features of the Irish character, thriftlessness and lack of independence.

“The Irish Priesthood urge upon their people the duty of large families. This is the way to possess Scotland, the genuine Scot will not be converted to Rome ; he must therefore be dispossessed by economic

pressure. Large families and again large families is the call of the Roman Church. If Irish parents, intemperate, thriftless and often criminal, cannot support their offspring, why, the Egyptians are waiting to be spoiled. Scottish ratepayers will and must be burdened with their support. Scottish hospitals are there to receive them when they are weak and diseased. Scottish charities will unloose their purse-strings to clothe and provide for them. And all the great ships sail south and west, carrying away from Scotland the finest peasantry and the most skilled artisans in the world, and leaving behind them such a people. *Sunt Lacrymæ Rerum.*"

Similarly in England, notably in Liverpool and district, in Wales round Cardiff, or indeed in any Protestant country where the Government and the mentally evolved citizens feel responsible for the whole community, those who have a lower standard of living without self-respect and are willing to take whatever is given to them, or they can obtain from the various funds available for the relief of destitution, can nowadays be quite sure of some support. It will be seen what a vista is opened to a Church

systematically encouraging the meek and humble to inherit the earth through fecundity, battenning on the self-denial of the self-respecting sections of the community who often suffer from enforced celibacy, childlessness, or one-child or two-child families because of this heavy burden upon their shoulders.

Meanwhile the Roman Catholics claim that their family life and their sectarian methods of educating and rearing their children must not be "interfered" with by any outside influence such as school education on sound lines. That Roman Catholics should take their instruction direct from their own Church in all these matters would be a perfectly logical and legitimate claim, were they at the same time to see that all destitution thus created was relieved directly out of Roman Catholic, as distinct from national, funds. But when, as at present, they absorb national resources, they do so at the expense of thrifty, self-respecting Protestants whom they are definitely and in many instances consciously "breeding out" of existence, and on whom they batten as a parasite battens upon its host.

That such an idea is chimerical, the mere

phantasy of my own imagination, was the taunt levelled at me when I suggested the above line of argument. So let us see it explicitly set out in a Roman Catholic pamphlet prominently displayed in Roman Catholic places of worship: In *Marriage: A Dialogue on the Christian Ideal*, published by the Catholic Truth Society, we read:

*Q.* "But among the poor you would not have miserable tuberculous babies brought into the world?"

*Ans.* "It is the conditions we must strive to alter—not to cure disease by death, for sterility is death. To a Christian who believes in immortality, the poor baby that passed its little span on earth in material wretchedness will be a glorious being for all eternity."

In the pamphlet by "A Catholic Woman Doctor," published by the Catholic Truth Society, *A City full of Boys and Girls*, we read: "Our faithful Catholic mothers are doing a wonderful work for God. In time, if wrong methods of birth control continue to prevail amongst non-Catholics, their race will die out, and the Catholic race will prevail, and thus England will again become what it once was, a Catholic country." "This is

no fancy picture. . . . What a vision for us who love our Blessed Lord, a Catholic England!"

The expression of this sentiment is recognised as a tactical error anywhere outside intimate Catholic circles. A Roman Catholic woman doctor may say these things to a closed circle of Roman Catholic women whom she might thus thrill by her exhortation, but such expressions of opinion, and such exhortations are not suited for general consumption. Perhaps that is why one hardly ever hears any such statement from a public platform where the ordinary press reporters are likely to be present. For public occasions a safer line is pursued in recent years, namely, the claim that the Church of Rome is as careful of the quality of the race as other denominations, and merely differs from them in taking a stand on a higher platform of ethical and moral superiority, and of claiming that such limitations and curtailment of population-increase as is necessitated should be achieved solely by the exercise of practices applauded by the Church.

If the virtues openly preached by Rome were practically effective, the community

at large would have no right to criticise, but are they effective?

At present in the over-populated districts of the cities, the slum-dwellers who produce long chains of defective C3 children are generally either themselves mentally defective or are Roman Catholics. The same story comes to hand incessantly. If magistrates, relieving officers, and others who come in contact with distressful cases would be more explicit about the *religion* of those before them, and the press would, in reporting cases that come before the Criminal Courts, mention in every case the denomination of the prisoner, the anti-racial results of the teaching of this sect of Christianity would become glaringly apparent.

It was a Roman Catholic couple who, after the father had been injured and lost an arm and become quite unfit for parenthood, and who went on the Dole as unemployable, thereafter, at the public expense, produced six helpless children. It was a mentally defective who formed the subject of a recent case coming before the magistrate, Mr. Claud Mullins, where a defective father had fourteen children nearly all defective also. In short, mental defect and Roman Catholi-

cism at present contribute *unemployables* to the national burden. Moreover, out of all proportion to their relative numbers the Roman Catholics produce the criminal, who is not only an injury to his neighbour, but a burden and expense to the State—that is, to the thrifty, self-supporting, tax-paying members of the community. It is foolish to talk of “the State” as though it was a supreme, endlessly resourceful, and God-like entity—the State, when it comes to putting money down for any social service, consists of just those individuals who show sufficient intelligence and thrift to earn and save a surplus of money over their own immediate needs. Those who do no more than feed themselves do not contribute through the coffers of the State to the upkeep of the defective or the criminal. It is the thrifty and intelligent man who works hard enough to be able to pay taxes who is, in effect, the State to whom the unthrifty and mentally weak turn for support and succour.

How, then, does the moral teaching of the Church of Rome, which claims to be so superior to all other ethics current at present, reveal itself when it comes to criminal statistics?

Rome's conspicuous place as a producer of criminals was shown in some statistics for this country, for Scotland, and for New Zealand (see p. 133). The following table of figures with comments comes recently from the United States of America, quoted from *The Truth Seeker*, vol. 60, No. 1, New York, January 1933:

#### "RELIGION AND PRISON POPULATION

"The 1931-1932 population of Sing Sing prison, where metropolitan criminals are confined, was 1581, according to a table given by the Catholic chaplain, Rev. John P. McCaffrey, who has recently canvassed the inmates by faith and reported in *The Commonwealth Catholic* weekly. The denominations are thus represented:

Catholics	.	.	.	.	855
Protestants	.	.	.	.	518
Jews	.	.	.	.	177
Christian Scientists	.	.	.	.	20
Buddhists	.	.	.	.	1
Mohammedans	.	.	.	.	2
No religion	.	.	.	.	8

"By way of explaining the fact that Catholic criminals in Sing Sing outnum-



bered all the rest, Chaplain McCaffrey says: 'The religious census of a prison follows the population of the area that feeds the prison'—a theory that fails in this case, because less than one-fourth of the population of the area that feeds Sing Sing are Catholics; yet Catholics form half the population of the prison. In the area are more Jews than Catholics; in the prison more than three hundred less; *while in the same area there are more of 'no religion' (non-communicants) than of either Catholics or Jews, and in Sing Sing are only eight so described.*"

It is the same story wherever figures are collected—the Roman Catholics are twice or more times likely to be criminals than any other sect.

Father Henry Davis, in his book, *Birth Control, the Fallacies of Dr. Marie Stopes*, published in 1928, answering me when I claimed that the individuals should consider their duty to the State, says of a woman: "She might rightly say, and every sane person would applaud her for saying, 'If I wish to spend my life and use all my means nursing my child through years of irremediable and painful sickness, may I not do so?' " But here the problem is put in much too simple a

form. It is seldom indeed that it is only *one* child such a mother has to nurse, and unless the mother who desires to use her life nursing this one child uses some method of birth control, or else refuses her husband his marital rights, she will find that it is not one child but a whole family whose painful sickness will be too much for her to nurse alone. But, for the sake of argument with Father Davis, let us assume the mother has but one child and reply, if the mother uses her own means for the sick child, well and good, she is not defrauding the State directly, but what about the mother (to whom the economist does rightly object) who produces sick children in sequence and expects them to be supported by their neighbours, or by the State?

The Roman Catholic replies: "We admit that it would be a national advantage if diseased children were not so numerous as they are said to be, but it will not do to interfere with the natural rights of marriage; we must endure the fractional physical evil in order to secure the great moral good, for to adopt contraception generally is a short way out of a difficulty calculated to bring greater evils in its train. If births are re-

stricted by unnatural means the national advantage gained thereby is only apparent, for the violation of the moral law can never be for the ultimate benefit of the State."

### STANDS ROME WHERE SHE DID?

One of the most remarkable phenomena which I have observed in the last ten years is the kaleidoscopic changing of the position consecutively assumed by the "unchanging Church" of Rome. When *Married Love* was published, about a dozen years ago, the general attitude of the Roman Church towards motherhood was that woman was there to create new souls for Heaven; that it did not matter very much what was the physical quality of the offspring she brought into the world, but that the *numbers* which she produced did matter. But now, driven from position to position in argument with me, the more popular pronouncements of the Roman Catholics are very different.

Take, for instance, the article appearing in the *Catholic Times* of 6th February 1931, "The Vocation of Marriage," by the Catholic Father Henry Davis, S.J." When one examines Catholic teaching in the works of approved theologians, one sees that very

little, or nothing at all, is said about any obligation on the part of the married of having a family. Whether the married live in continence, or have a single child, or several children, there is no obligation to act otherwise. The marriage contract is a Sacrament for the continent as much as for the prolific. **If an only child is the deliberate fruit of the union, parents do no moral wrong if they have no more children.** If many children are the fruit of the union there are so many more hearts to love God, and so many more creatures to glorify Him."

And in his pamphlet on *State Sterilisation of the Unfit*, published in 1931, Father Henry Davis, S.J., said: "It is simply indefensible to maintain that marital relations may never be exercised except when offspring should ensue."

Rome is well-nigh ready to reform.

## ENVOI

EXPERTS know, and the general public is beginning to realise, that infants brought into existence by mothers who have no power to control their own motherhood have a lesser chance of life, and are not so satisfactory as those of women who can control their motherhood in accordance with their health. The first of the religious sects to realise this was the Friends (or Quakers), and their inquiry and findings favourable to birth control preceded those of the Anglican Bishops at Lambeth by several years.

It is well to remember simultaneously that in the criminal statistics available for this country, the Quakers head the list by not appearing at all, whereas the only denomination now rabidly and violently opposed to scientific control of motherhood produce criminals out of all proportion to their total numbers in this country.

The deepest, formative influence, weaving from the embryo's manifold hereditary potentialities the actual fate of the child as determined by its character and physical health, is the period of ten lunar months of development within its mother's body. I dealt with this in my book, *Radiant Motherhood*, in 1920, and the only change since in my feelings and knowledge about this aspect of our population problems is to intensify my feeling and strengthen by accumulated facts the views expressed then.

The greatest hope of humanity is the joyful exercise of conscientiously controlled motherhood by women fitted to be mothers.

In this generation humanity is just beginning to experience the thrill, which trembles as a dawning realisation in all quarters of the globe, of the vast potentiality for goodness and beauty made possible in recent years by scientific knowledge, so simplified and attainable that even women with very little book learning can as queens, royally independent, fulfil their supreme vocation of motherhood and no longer breed as slaves of chance.

But one should not forget that there are still, and will be for centuries, many grades

of human beings individually arriving at different phases of evolution. The highest must lead, and the highest, as I have tried to show in my little pamphlet, *Sex and Religion*, is the mating pair who realise that: "God Himself creates human beings by the use of the sex organs of human beings at present existing in this world. In this way humanity collaborates in the divine work of creation."

It has been a source of unspeakable degradation and incalculable distress to humanity that our vocabulary has been so poverty stricken that the word "sex" has become smeared and soiled to the detriment of the thing itself.

"Let us think what the word 'sex' denotes to the average mind—a swift, hazy, kaleidoscopic series of half-blurred pictures of the worse than bestiality in dens and haunts of degraded mankind; of the barbarities of the male savage towards his female; of the refined horror of modern prostitution; of the purely physical relation of the mating animals. Try as he will, the modern man cannot free his own mental concept of sex from some fringe, some hazy aura of all these things because the word 'sex' is applied to them all, and they, therefore, fantastically

appear to be aspects of the same thing which he and his noble and beautiful beloved are living together. The life that he and his beloved are living together is, however, not comparable nor is it soiled by the attributes of these other phenomena. It is, in my opinion, a freshly evolved, nobler, subtler, immensely richer, and more beautiful thing than the primitive or the aberrant forms which it has passed and outwinged on its way upwards.

“For the modern relation between man and woman mated or living in the innumerable interdependencies, the mutual obeisances, the mutual respects which are not paralleled at all in the sex relation of the primitive peoples or in the debased lives of the violently depraved, a clean, fresh, subtle word is wanted, and instead of the soiled and degraded word ‘sexual’ life, for this new and elevated interplay between man and woman I propose the word ‘erogamic’ life.”

I coined the word “erogamic” to crystallise a vital idea that is in our midst though barely recognised. “It is derived from the Greek: *eros*—love, and *gamos*—marriage or mating. I mint it with the intention that it shall designate that noble flower of the



duality of human life, the mating and relation together of man and woman in all three places—physical, mental, and spiritual.”

I define it as “All that relation, in cultivated communities, between man and woman as mated pair which involves their mutual interplay and interdependencies in physical, mental, and spiritual life.”<sup>1</sup>

Once the beams of light from every centre of knowledge have illuminated love, it is my hope that the whole world, including every devoted Roman Catholic, will agree with me that God having made man in His own image, and having left to mankind the making of His replicas, *it is blasphemy to produce soiled, diseased, degenerate, and misbegotten reproductions of what should be that divinely lovely thing, a human body*. For not only is the body made in the image of God, it is the instrument of the soul. Were my work but understood, my warmest fellow-workers would be those who take life most seriously and joyfully as that part of eternity during which they impinge directly on this world, and in it can serve God in accordance with the excellence of their human faculties, and

<sup>1</sup> Quotation from Dr. Marie Stopes' *Sex and Religion*. (First published December 1929. Putnam. Price 6d.)

in themselves can enjoy life in proportion as the mechanism of their body works in fundamental harmony within itself and in conjunction with its environment.

If Roman Catholics are to play their part in the noblest development of mankind, they must replace the unnatural and debased within their midst with a simple wholesomeness and real naturalness consonant with true enlightenment.

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